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A TOUR ROUND ENGLAND.

BY

WALTER THORNBURY,

AUTHOR OF 'HAUNTED LONDON,' ETC.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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TO

CHARLES DICKENS, ESQ.

MY DEAR MR. DICKENS,

It is now nearly two years ago since you first suggested to me the writing of a tour through England. Starting from London and making straight for the sea, you advised me to branch "as the crow flies," alternately north, south, east, and west, and to pick up from a bird's-eye point of perspective as I passed any beautiful or memorable place, all I could—whether of an historical, biographical, or legendary nature—that would interest general readers. This idea, however imperfectly worked out, led to a series of papers, which first appearing in *All the Year Round*, and there very kindly received, are now collected in the following pages in an enlarged and revised form.

I am, my dear Mr. Dickens,

Yours very sincerely,

WALTER THORNBURY.

FONTHILL COTTAGE, DORKING.

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FIRST FLIGHT.

DUE WEST.

A TOUR ROUND ENGLAND.

CHAPTER I.

BRENTFORD TO HOUNSLOW.

GLANCING down from the golden cross of St. Paul's, the crow cleaves the dim air westward over miles of nursery gardens—lonely plains of rich black earth, lit by a red foggy sun that glows like a red-hot shot. The fruit-tree leaves are brown and crimson above, the little green files of infant lettuces that are growing up for that ravenous monster London, whose hunger is insatiable as that of the Ocean. Edens, with the glory departed, are the gardens of Barnes and Chiswick now—Armada's pleasaunces with the enchantment vanished. Instead of miles of rosy and snowy apple-blossoms, tangles of dead bines and rusted bushes; instead of great yellow gourd flowers, dingy fading and the damp odour of autumn's decay. A little waste of furze, red piles of smoking bricks, a green gleam of meadows under the cold November sunlight, long lines of mossy garden walls, and we are at Brentford—the old British village by the ford of the Thames.

The long straggling little town is situated on the banks of the Brent, a humble yet useful stream that, rising in Hertfordshire, winds its way, like a silver snake, through Middlesex, till it slips into the Thames in the bay the noble river makes between the promontories of Mortlake and Richmond. Always a station on the great western Road, Brentford, or Brainford, was for centuries a chosen spot for violent deaths; and armies marching on London have often met on the Brent's banks with enraged citizens buzzing angrily forth to defend the entrance of their busy hive.

Those restless Danes, now so quiet and friendly, were hard upon us for full three centuries. Their black raven banner was for ever flaunting over our burnt corn-fields, or through our plundered villages. Flocking fleets of venturous fishing-boats, crowded with rugged men in mail, were always discharging their fierce and ruthless cargoes upon our northern and western coasts. Though King Alfred smote them hard with axe and sword in fifty-six battles, still the Hydra's heads grew faster than ever his brand could scorch or steel strike. About fifty years before the Conquest, the robbers came over faster and fiercer than ever. Etheldred flew from them to sue for Norman help. Then Sweyn, King of Denmark, seized the vacant English throne, and Canute, his son, inherited it at his death. That stalwart Saxon, Edmund Ironside,

having raised the siege of London, drove the Norsemen in growling and sullen heaps through Kensington, Hammersmith, and Chiswick to Brentford, where he and his mailed men fell on and slew the Danish wolves in heaps. After a fierce jostle of swords, spears, and axes, King Edmund forded the river at Kew, and drove the Danes and their black banners through Surrey into Kent, where he again smote them terribly. At this period, at low ebb, at Brentford the chroniclers record there was seldom more than three feet of water in the Thames.

Short-lived victory of King Edmund's; for in the October of that same year that so many slain Danes floated down past Fulham and Chelsea towards the sea, the Saxon conqueror was murdered at Oxford by a robber who had intruded at the royal banquet. His troublous reign had lasted only seven months, and those months only of march and battle.

Then a great darkness descended upon the town by the ford. Happy is the town or country of which purblind history has little to record. Births, marriages, and deaths continued; but the town did not come up to the surface again; dived, in fact, into the darkness of Lethe for four centuries. In the twenty-fifth year of Henry the Sixth (1447), Brentford, always a mere ecclesiastical postscript to Hanwell or Ealing, was honoured by a chapel at the Turnham Green end of the town, built by John Somerset,

Chancellor of the Exchequer and chaplain to the weak but devout king, who founded here, by the quiet river side, a priory or fraternity "of the Nine Orders of Angels," the holy brotherhood being entitled to dispense the goodly but not excessive sum of forty pounds per annum, which revenue was, in the first year of that wise infant Edward the Sixth, graciously granted by the proud Protector, Duke of Somerset (the same who built Somerset House with the stones of pulled-down churches), to his own worshipful self. The year the handsome king Henry VI. married that proud and dangerous woman, Margaret of Anjou, amid universal rejoicings, Brentford shone out in special splendour; for a Chapter of the Order of the Garter was held at the Lion Inn (of all places in the world; fancy the self-importance of the landlord on such a stupendous day!). How the jewels must have sparkled among the pewter flagons! how plumes must have waved at plain latticed windows! how cloth of gold must have trailed over rush-strewn floors, and blazoned tapestry lit up the simple rooms of the plain country tavern! The future foemen of York and Lancaster, the white and red roses not yet assumed, must here have joined hands that were some day to close in the death grip. The malign Crookback must have been at the Lion, and the outwitted Clarence whom he murdered in the Tower.

Exhausted by this grandeur, Brentford again dived,

to reappear suddenly, like a dab chick on the surface of history, in the last year of burning Mary—that cruel daughter of a Spanish bigot who did her best to crush truth and crown error by burning two hundred and seventy-seven innocent persons in the space of three years. The unhappy hypochondriacal woman died in the cold November of 1558, and in the hot July of the same year her last act of cruelty had been to burn six martyrs at Brentford, close to the Lion Inn. Bonner and Gardner, when they rejoiced at the holocaust, little thought how soon their butchery was to end. Yet God had so willed it.

It is now more than ninety years ago that the chapel at Brentford was pulled down, and the present doleful brick structure—flat, lifeless, and oppressive as one of Blair's sermons—upreared. In the chancel, in 1634 (Charles the First), was solemnly interred a resident of New Brentford, that very mischievous man, William Noy, the king's attorney-general, a lawyer with a mind as narrow and as sharp as an axe. It was this creature of the Stuarts who is supposed to have proposed the detested and illegal writ for levying ship money, which first aroused Hampden, and afterwards the whole nation. Noy was a friend of the equally dangerous Laud, and the still more dangerous Strafford. It was this same lawyer who gave the St. John the Baptist window to Lincoln's-Inn Chapel. Ill came of his ill-earned money, for he left it to a wild

prodigal son, who was soon ruined, and was at last killed in a duel. The dying father had written in his will these hopeless words: "Left to be squandered, and I hope no better from him."

Noy died just in time, for the wild storm that was fast rising eastward would certainly have drifted over Brentford way and whistled off the old rascal's head. An old legal story (probably mediæval) used to be told of Noy, and has no doubt often been narrated in Brentford parlours. Noy was said, when young, to have defended, with the wisdom of Solomon and the subtlety of Macchiavelli himself, a poor landlady with whom three graziers had left some money in trust. One of these men, turning rascal, parting from the other two, went back, claimed the money, and ran away. The two other men, in their fury, sued the woman for the sum, denying their consent. Mr. Noy, retained for the defence, rose up, grave, calm, and pale, and pleaded that the money was ready to to be given up the very moment the three men came together to claim it. Rogers tells the story in his "Italy," and gives the "quiddity" a romantic turn after his manner. The sallow wizen old lawyer and his ponderous coach must have been a great feature on the west road in the days of Laud and Strafford.

In 1642, the very year the lamentable civil war broke out, the gable ends and long latticed windows of Brentford's long street looked down at strange

wild scenes, at sabre slashing and pistol firing, at lines of fierce pikemen and files of savage musketeers. On a stormy day in August the wilful and misguided monarch, impatient, as he wrote to the resolute Parliament, to be any longer "the mere outside of the picture"—the sign of a King Charles—raised his great blazoned standard in Nottingham. On the 23rd of October, the Cavaliers and Puritans met under the ridge of Edgehill. Rupert's first hot charge swept away at one fell swoop the buff coats and steel caps of the Parliament cavalry. Left wing and right wing of the sour grim faces went down before Rupert's red dripping sabres, and the crash of Aston's and of Wilmot's men. Biron's raw reserve, however, lost discipline, and hurried on like unbroken bloodhounds in the cruel chase between the autumn hedges and down the long miry Warwickshire lanes. Rupert had no more head than the late Lord Cardigan, and never knew how to keep his cavalry well in hand—a virtue, indeed, rare with English cavalry officers, as Wellington often lamented. The calmer Puritans, unheated by wine or passion, soon saw the advantage, and bore down on the king's infantry. The royal standard was taken, General Lindsey struck down, and all would have been lost but for the return of Rupert and his jaded horse from the long hunt across country. It was, after all, a drawn battle; the loss was said to be equal; neither army would leave the field. Essex

was, however, the first to sullenly retire. As he hurried back from Warwick to London, the king pushed on for Banbury, took Oxford, and seized Reading. The Parliament was alarmed, the king rashly sanguine. These early movements were indeed indicative of future events, of thousands of rash pursuits, of many cool intrepid seizings of opportunities.

The fight through Brentford to the banks of the Thames, so highly picturesque and characteristic of cavalier faults, has been described by an eye-witness, whose letter, discoloured by time, still remains in the Ashmolean Museum. On Saturday, early, the Cavaliers marched from Ashford, and on Hounslow Heath all the king's foot met with pike and gun, expecting battle, but none was offered. They then moved on to Hounslow town, and from thence to Brentford, where, *unexpectedly* (no precaution of scouts, of course), they were encountered by two or three of Essex's regiments, who had thrown up some small barricades at the end of New Brentford. The van of the Cavaliers (a thousand muskets or so) answered their shot so sharply and "fitting," that in an hour or less the Parliament men forsook their outpost work and retreated to another between New and Old Brentford, from whence and from a brick house hard by, with two small ordnance, they gave the Cavalier musketeers a hot lasting and stinging shower of bullets. The regiment of the writer's colonel, Sir Ed-

ward Fitton, was the sixth brought to the assault, after five others had discharged their pieces (no breech-loaders then, and the matches soon burnt out); and had the happy honour, in the name of God and the king, assisted by Heaven and a piece of cannon, to arrive at the very nick to drive the Roundheads from the second work. Then there was much butchery, sabring, firing, pistolling, and a savage use of the butt-ends of muskets. It went indeed very ill with the Parliament men. The Cavaliers cut down a lieutenant-colonel, two sergeant-majors, several captains, and thirty or forty petty officers and common soldiers. But what was most pitiful to see was about two hundred of the Roundheads running into the Thames, and drowning themselves in their efforts to escape the sword and fire. There were six or eight London colours taken, and the two pieces of ordnance; and all this with the loss of not more than sixteen hard-drinking, hard-swearing cavaliers. Then, thinking all done for the night (incautious again, and too contemptuous of the enemy), the king's men sent two regiments up the old town of Brentford to make good the entrance; but they were again charged by musketeers, whom they drove towards Hammersmith, and so remained masters of Brentford. That night the Cavaliers lay in the cold flat fields by the river, but were awoke next morning at daybreak by the "loud music of cannon," which, it appeared, came from fourteen barges, that Essex

had sent with thirteen guns and six hundred men from Kingston to London. The Cavaliers instantly opened fire from the river bank and from the garden wall of Sion House, and within two or three hours' space sank four or five of the barges, with their guns, and took the rest and eight of the cannon before breakfast. But London had been hotly arming ever since the first frightened fugitives dashed through Temple Bar from Edgehill and from Reading. The apprentices were gathering, the pikes were passing fast through Brompton and past Putney; Puritan flags already began to show along the river side, and to cast ominous shadows in the Thames. A great army was marching rapidly down upon the writer of the letter and his friends. The City was roused at last. A steady reinforcement of pikes soon swelled the army of cool resolute Essex to twenty-four thousand men. The king's men were too weary to push on for London; the king had had successes enough for the present; the horse was the pillar of his army, and they had no room to fight, cooped up between Brentford and Isleworth; so he resolved to retire to Oxford, his great depôt, viâ Reading. The order was given; the foot drew back quickly towards Hounslow; the horse dragoons keeping Essex deceived by a flourish of galloping resistance till the foot was safe gone, then cantered off, the enemy playing on their rear with cannon, but with no great success, here and

there only a steel cap falling from his horse or a horse dropping under his rider. It was in the next fatal year that the stainless Hampden rode wounded to the death from the field at Chalgrove.

To all persons fond of dramatic literature and that delightful Thespian art—surely the pleasantest and most harmless that ever enhanced joy or beguiled sorrow—the town of Brentford must be always dear; for were not its two illustrious princes, those nameless but illustrious and high-souled monarchs who figure so majestically in the Duke of Buckingham's REHEARSAL—that admirable burlesque of the stilted rhyming tragedies of Dryden and Davenant, Howard and Stapleton? This play, written, it is said, by the duke and his friends and protégés, Butler, Clifford and Sprat, was an imitation of the manner of Beaumont's Knight of the Burning Pestle, as it was certainly the prototype of Fielding's Tom Thumb, Rhodes' Bombastes Furioso, Sheridan's Critic, and the best of all such works ever since. Originally written at Davenant and Howard, after lying by to ripen for six years, the burlesque was maliciously reshaped to hold Dryden up to ridicule as Bayes, the fussy, empty, intolerably and fretfully vain dramatic author, who is eminently ridiculous with his "i'gads" and his scraps of French and sham learning. The Rehearsal was produced in the winter of 1671, eleven years after the Restoration, and three years before

the death of Milton. Bayes was played by Lacy—an excellent comedian and a favourite of Charles the Second, no mean judge—who had been a cavalier officer, and had himself written several comedies. The duke took, it is said, incredible pains to make him mimic Dryden's dress and hesitating mannner of recitation. The poet's impatience at the ignorance and insolence of the players, his extravagant metaphors, his self-confidence, and his bombast, are cruelly bantered. How witty is the passage in the third act, where Bayes praises Mr. Johnson for liking his play.

"I know you have wit, by the judgment you make of this play; for that is the measure I go by; my play is my touchstone. When a man tells me such a one is a person of parts, is he so, say I? What do I do but bring him presently to see this play. If he likes it, I know what to think of him; if not, your most humble servant, sir; I'll no more of him; upon my word, I thank you. I am clara voyant, a-gad. Now, here we go on with our business.

Scene 2.—*Enter the* TWO USURPERS, *hand-in-hand.*"

Nor could the frequent rant of Dryden be better parodied than in the magnificent nonsense spouted by Prince Prettyman; as, for instance:

"I'd sooner have a passion for a whale,
In whose vast bulk, though store of oyl doth lie,
We find more shape, more beauty, in a fly."

Sheridan himself did not surpass, in his story of Tilbury Fort, Buckingham's battle:

"*Herald.* The army at the door, and in disguise,
Desires a word with both your majesties.
2 *Herald.* Having from Knightsbridge hither marched by stealth.
2 *King.* Bid 'em attend awhile, and drink our health.
1 *King.* Here, take five guineas for those warlike men——
2 *King.* And here's five more, that makes the sum just ten.
Herald. We have not seen so much the Lord knows when."

The following was perhaps some pleasant memory of old campaigning days, when the Cavaliers, dashing through Brentford, may have laughed at victories hereafter to be associated with the homely names of Chelsea, Chiswick, and Fulham. Bayes, not wishing to frighten the ladies, by making people run one another through vulgarly with swords, brings on the King's general and the Usurper's lieutenant-general, with lutes in their hands, shouting directions to their imaginary armies:

"*L. G.* Advance from Acton with the musquetiers.
G. Draw down the Chelsea Cuirasiers.
L. G. The band you boast of, Chelsea Cuirasiers,
Shall in my Putney pikes now meet their peers.
G. Chiswickians, aged, and renowned in fight,
Joyn with the Hammersmith brigade.
L. G. You'll find my Mortlake boys will do them right,
Unless by Fulham numbers overlaid.
G. Let the left wing of Twick'nam foot advance,
And line that eastern hedge.
L. G. The horse I rais'd in petty France
Shall try their chance,
And scour the meadows overgrown with sedge."

A convenient eclipse divides the intrepid foes, while that tremendous fellow Drawcansir comes in and kills every one on both sides, horse and foot, and then bellows out a speech of more magnificent nonsense than even the "Indian Emperor" or the "Conquest of Granada" could boast.

The witty reckless duke, vicious as he was unstable, had his loud laugh at Drury Lane; and Dryden frowned in silence whilst the duke went on with his foolish alchemy and building, his plotting with the Puritans, and his shameless amours. Ten years after, however, appeared Dryden's Absolom and Achitophel. The poet's revenge was that Rembrandtic portrait of Buckingham as Zimri. Dryden himself thought this passage worth the whole poem: "Not bloody," he said, "but ridiculous enough. He for whom it was intended was too witty to resent it as an injury. It succeeded as I wished; the jest went round, and he was laughed at in his turn who first began the frolic."

Seven years after the duke died of a cold, caught out hunting. So perished Zimri. We all remember the sharp scourging lines:

> "A man so various that he seemed to be
> Not one, but all mankind's epitome;
> Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong;
> Was everything by starts, and nothing long;
> But, in the course of one revolving moon,
> Was chymist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon."

Seven years later Pope crowned these verses in the

same equally bitter, but in a less true tone. At the bottom of Buckingham-street, the old water-gate of the duke's house (York House) still stands, sooty, ruined, and forlorn. On the black frieze may even now be read the old Villiers motto:

"Fidei coticula crux."
(The cross is the whetstone of faith.)

The river used to wash up to the lower steps, but now the earth is green there with thick weeds.

Brentford cemetery contains some Attic dust, for under that earth, in 1769, went Luke Sparkes, a great comedian in his day, and also Henry the Gifford, manager of Goodman's Field Theatre—that humble eastern house where Garrick, after his debût in the room over the arch of St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell, first appeared to draw thither all the wisdom and wealth of western London. Sparkes, a reasonably good tragedian, succeeded Quin in his parts, and performed them creditably. He was a good Capulet, though Tate Wilkinson used to mimic his peculiarities in that character. Sparkes was one of the many men whom Macklin accused of ridiculing him. On his death-bed Sparkes particularly requested that Parson Horne would read the burial service over him. Gifford was a superior man, who had been a clerk in the South Sea House, and left the desk to tread the boards. He afterwards took the Portugal-street Theatre, but his fame chiefly rests on his connexion with Garrick.

That sturdy republican and shrewd logical thinker, Horne Tooke, was curate of Brentford from 1760 to 1771. His memory is one not to be forgotten in the town, for Parson Tooke—the arch, satirical, witty, and learned man, whom Dr. Parr so detested, and whom Dr. Johnson described as "very clear, because very shallow"—left a deep stamp upon the place. Tooke was born in Westminster in 1736, educated at Westminster and Eton, and matriculated at St. John's, Cambridge. One of the sternest and most sincere of republicans, he became the bitter enemy of that impudent demagogue Wilkes, as soon as he discovered the shameless insincerity of the man. "Right divine," Tooke used to often say, under those grave trees of Sion Park, as his gown rustled (such a month as this) over the brown carpet of the fallen leaves—"right divine?—a new jargon. Cromwell was thought daring because he said that if he ever found himself opposite King Charles in battle, he would discharge his piece into his bosom as soon as any other man's. I go further. I would not have waited for chance; I would have hunted him through the ranks, and without the least personal enmity, have discharged my pistol into his bosom *rather* than into any other man's." Tooke himself told John Taylor (Monsieur Tonson), and they were both truthful men, that when conducting his correspondence with the terrible Junius, he knew who the man in the

mask was, but would never disclose it. In this public duel Junius was overthrown in reasoning, yet, from his literary skill, his Parthian retreat seemed almost like a victory.

Tooke was an acute critic and profound scholar, and his great philological work, The Diversions of Purley, is scarcely yet entirely superseded. The learned but not irreproachable parson was never married, but he had two illegitimate daughters, whom he brought up as good Latin scholars. He wrote his great work in 1773, when he resigned the church (for which he was obviously quite unfit), and retired to a cottage near his old house in Windmill-lane. There he studied law and philosophy. Then he went to his year's imprisonment for libelling the king's troops in America, the time when he wrote his acute letter to Mr. Dunning, afterwards Lord Ashburton. He still continued a great inveigher against government at the Revolutionary Society, in 1790 and 1796 stood for Westminster, was thrown out, and eventually got mixed up with Hardy, Thelwall, and the violent imprudent Copenhagen Fields set, and was prosecuted for high treason. After his acquittal he grew more cautious, and was elected for Old Sarum; but the government had an eye on him, and soon cuckooed him out by passing a bill to prevent clergymen being representatives in parliament. He then retired into private life, lived at Richmond-buildings, and afterwards at

Wimbledon, and died in 1802, at the age of seventy-six, contented, gay, and philosophical almost to the last. We say almost, because his philosophy gave way under the final torture, and he became irascible, violent, and impatient. His eccentric desire to be buried in his garden was disregarded by his alarmed executors. An old ballad, often shouted through the streets of Brentford, ran:

> "John Wilkes he was for Middlesex;
> They chose him knight of the shire;
> And he made a fool of Alderman Bull,
> And called Parson Horne a liar."

On a Sunday morning, the 17th of January, 1841 (the year the Prince of Wales was born), a very serious inundation swept about a hundred thousand pounds' worth of property out of Brentford in a few hours. Near the centre of civilization, one is apt to consider those great dumb aggressive forces of nature, the hurricane, the flood, the earthquake and the volcano, as disarmed and powerless; and when they do come, they appear more terrible from their long concealment. The Brent, swollen by half the brooks and rivulets of Hertfordshire and Middlesex, and breaking up angrily after the cold imprisonment of a long frost, bore down on Brentford with a furious and dangerous flood. Boats were rowed up and down the streets to save life and property; and the misery and confusion was incredible.

The statistics of Brentford are soon summed up. Old Brentford, in the parish of Great Ealing, faces Kew Green; New Brentford is partly in the parish of Hanwell. It seems a centre of antediluvian fossils, for bones of the hippopotamus and elephant have been found by the river side, pointing to an age when tree ferns had not yet turned to coal, when our climate was warm as that of Egypt, and the great monsters of Upper Africa wallowed where Kew Bridge now casts the shadow of its arches. The town boasts of foundries and distilleries, a petty sessions court, and a workhouse for four hundred happy paupers, representing ten parishes, twenty-nine square miles of population, and thirty-three thousand souls. The income of the living is two hundred and eighty-three pounds. In 1852, there were three hundred and seventy-two houses, and in 1841 the population was two thousand one hundred and seventy-four. From here to London the roads are lighted with gas. The town, where an annual court leet is held by the lord of the manor, is partly in the hundred of Ossulstone and partly in the hundred of Elthorne.

For a quaint characteristic picture by the Thames side—such as poor Gainsborough, who lies yonder across the water, over in Kew churchyard, would have painted so well—commend us to Isleworth, just by the Ferry, with the quaint old posting inn,

"The London Apprentice," on one side, with its roofs, arbours and balconies looking out on the little willow islands and the calm current of the broad river. Nobody without a cocked hat should be allowed to visit such a quaint old haunt, for it becomes red heels, flowing sacques, and bag wigs. Equally quaint are the old almshouses, on the left-hand side from London, founded in 1741 (George the Second), by a worthy Mrs. Anne Foulton, for twelve poor souls taken from the shady side of Fortune. They were reared, probably, in generous rivalry of Lady Elizabeth Hill's school, or Sir Thomas Ingram's good work, who, in 1671 (Charles the Second) built almshouses at Isleworth for six poor women. The Foulton Almshouses, whose pleasant little gardens are now gay with cool coloured chrysanthemums, face south on the high road by the Mill Bridge, and north on the river; so that great party-coloured sails, half black, half orange, are always gliding past them towards Brentford or Richmond. With the church, by the ferry, rebuilt in Queen Anne's reign, we associate Swift, Pope, Gay, and Arbuthnot. We fancy them with their eyes on the scaffolds crutching up the old ivied tower, as they are rowed by towards the little wasp's nest at Twickenham, forgetting it only as Richmond opens upon them at the bend, with all its splendour of hanging woods, rich in colour, and its villas gold-plated by

the autumn sunshine. There is "snug lying" under the gilt-lined dial in that calm river-side churchyard by the ferry, where the cedar darkens, and the soft splash of the ferryman's oars could not disturb any one seven feet deep under the rank grass, or under the slanting gray stone, the tally to mark a seed plot in Death's neglected garden. It is astonishing how soon, once out of the metropolis, the little tributary towns assume a local character of their own. Here is a little village, with only about seven thousand inhabitants, with its parochial buildings, its reading-rooms, schools, and market-place, proud, no doubt, of itself and disdainful of London follies; and well it may be, for marquises, and lords and ladies, and dukes, live near it, and cast upon the dull, long, and rather dingy street a halo of aristocracy.

The Northern Duke's name is a tower of strength at Isleworth; for the iron gates of Sion, opening kindly to all comers, peer or beggar, form the eastern frontier of the pleasant parish. That chivalrous king, Henry the Fifth, founded a nunnery here for the Sisters of St. Bridget, and called it after the holy mountain of Jerusalem, in 1414, the year before Agincourt. Edward the Sixth gave Sion to his uncle, the greedy Protector, who rebuilt the house and enlarged the gardens, adding a high triangular terrace, which the restless enemies of the proud and ambitious man declared was a fortification on which to mount guns, and

formed part of his design on the Crown. After his execution, Sion was given to John Dudley, Earl of Northumberland; and here, by the river side, peacefully lived the earl's son, Lord Guildford Dudley, and his innocent young wife, Lady Jane Grey. The house certainly had for a time the curse upon it which the expelled monks and nuns declared fell on all the great robbers of church lands. It was at Sion House that the touching scenes of that sad episode in our history occurred, a gentle, loving young wife torn by cruel Fate from her husband's arms, to be hurled into the whirlpool of ambition. To Sion House the ambitious duke came to offer the guileless Lady Jane the crown, and from here she was led in state to the Tower as a queen, to commence her unhappy and short-lived reign of only eleven days. The duke was beheaded in 1553, and Sion House reverted to the Crown. Queen Mary at once restored it to the Bridgetines, who meekly repossessed it till Elizabeth stamped her foot and drove them out again into the cold and careless world. Then Henry Percy the ninth Earl of Northumberland, received the unlucky gift, and his son Algernon employed that clever Welshman, Ben Jonson's enemy, Inigo Jones, to new face the inner court and finish the great hall. Soon more misfortune harboured at Sion House, for the Dukes of York and Gloucester and the Princess Elizabeth were sent here by the stern Parliament,

and were treated by the earl and countess with loyal respect. The fated King Charles often came to Isleworth to see them, and the poor children (innocent victims of the faults of others) remained here, playing about the park and rowing on the river, till the year their misguided father died, like a gentleman, outside the windows of Whitehall.

In 1682, the proud Duke of Somerset married Josephine, the heiress of the Earl of Northumberland, and Sion House became his. He lent the house to the good-natured but selfish Princess Anne, who resided here when she quarrelled with Queen Mary. On the duke's death, his son gave Sion to his daughter and son-in-law, the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland, and they altered and improved the whole place, Robert Adam (one of the Adelphi) being the architect. He, with his usual energy and Scotch common sense, made the place what it now is, removed the Protector's triangular terrace, pulled down the walls of the old Nunnery-gardens, levelled the ground before the house—in fact, changed Sion from a prison into a palace. Towards the Thames, Adam razed walls and cut a lake, sloping the lawn so that the river could be seen from even the lower windows. He serpentined water through the gardens, and built two bridges, raising on that nearest Brentford a Doric column crowned by a statue of Flora. The Green House, in the bad taste of those

early times, he built in what he believed to be the Gothic style, leaving the old monastry walls for the back and end. He constructed a colonaded gateway for the entrance, floored the vestibule with scagliola (then a new invention we believe), and adorned it with twelve large columns of costly verde antique, each supporting a gilt statue. The dining-room was hung with tri-coloured damask, and was embellished with two tables of Roman mosaic found in the baths of Titus. The glasses, one hundred and eight inches high, were the largest that had then been seen in England. The chimney-piece was of marble and ormolu. The great gallery, at once a library and a museum, was one hundred and thirty-three feet long. In the cornice was inserted a series of medallion portraits of all the great personages of the houses both of Percy and Seymour. The turrets in the pavilion at either end commanded landscapes of perpetual beauty. The Sion stucco work (we despise stucco now as false and flimsy and pretending to be what it is not) was thought, in 1762, by respectful guide-book writers, to be "after the most beautiful style of the antique, and finished in a light and elegant manner after the finest remains of antiquity." So times change, and we also luckily change with them.

CHAPTER II.

HOUNSLOW HEATH.

SWIFT in a phantom mail coach, skeleton ghosts of four "spankers" whirl us along the great west road. The ghostly guard blows a faint blast on his phantom horn as we dash through the long dingy street of Brentford, by the church of which Horne Tooke was once the jovial and learned vicar, and sweep on with whizzing wheels past broad nursery gardens, lit by a rayless autumn sun that's smouldering in the thick November air like the lamplit orange bottle in a chemist's window. Here and there, a ladder reared against fruit-tree boughs on which the forlorn leaves are hoisting saffron and crimson signals of distress shows where the last russets and leather jackets have just been picked for all-devouring London. We leave behind us Isleworth, where the old ivied church tower looks down upon the ferry, and ghosts of Hogarth's time seem for ever grouped round the doorway of that quaint inn, "The London Appren-

tice." We leave the river almshouses and the little garden where dark barge-sails drift by; we leave the rows of shops and the gables of the small town at the Duke's gate, and we are soon at Hounslow and on legendary ground.

Were we magicians, like Aladdin's wicked uncle, we would at once call together the dispersed atoms of the last highwayman who rattled in chains above the Hounslow furze bushes. From the roots of the fir trees, and the earth beneath the brambles, from the flints of the road side and the water of the rivulets, we would collect the fragments of the wicked body, till once more the "Captain" who swore "by the bones of Jimmy Abershaw" should appear in his black glaring mask, gold-laced cocked hat and scarlet roquelaure, his silver "pops" in his deep pockets, and bestriding his chestnut mare, the bold, daring, and reckless rascal of those pleasant days when thirteen gibbets stood at one time near Bason Bridge on the road to Heston. Yes, at the beginning of this century thirteen shapeless bundles of rags, which the frightened traveller shuddered to think had once been bold devil-may-care horsemen, dangled at one time in view of the traveller across the terrible heath. It was indeed an old joke against Lord Islay who formerly lived at Hounslow, that, ordering his gardener to cut an avenue to open a view, the landscape disclosed a gibbet with a thief on it, and

several members of the Campbell family having died with their shoes on, the prospect awoke such ominous and unpleasant reminiscences that Lord Islay instantly ordered the avenue to be closed up again with a clump of thick Scotch firs.

If a highwayman who galloped to the gallows a century ago could see Hounslow Heath now, he would wonder where the four thousand acres that once covered the fourteen parishes had shrunk to. He would find only a few dozen acres of grass field enclosed for the cavalry reviews on one side of the road, and a few dozen acres of rough furze and bramble on the other for cavalry drill. The local historians say this heath, so often drenched with blood, was once an oak forest that spread its green boughs over the whole country of the Trinobantes, from Staines to Brentford, and was turned into common land in the reign of Henry the Third. There is indeed a very interesting old tradition that the last wolf killed in England, centuries ago now, was hunted down in Perry Valley, near Feltham Hill. The human wolves lingered later.

In Charles the First's time Hounslow contained one hundred and twenty houses, chiefly inns and ale houses depending on travellers. The town was always fed by the coaches of the great west road. Even now every third house is still an inn or a beer shop. Ruined stables, faded signs of the Mar-

quis of Granby and other bygone celebrities, still testify to the old prosperity of the place in the days when the Comet used to come flashing in, five minutes under the hour from Piccadilly.

Let us sketch the Comet of those old days. Tom Brown, the coachman, allows only fifty seconds for changing horses, smart's the word with him. Tom, in the neat white hat, the clean doeskin gloves, the well cut trousers and dapper frock—we quote a contemporaneous portrait—is the pink of Jarvies. The coach about to run the dangers of the heath, is a strong well-built canary-coloured drag, a bull's head on the doors, a Saracen's head on the hind boot. It carries fourteen passengers at fourteen miles an hour, guaranteed pace. There is a big bell-mouthed blunderbuss, ready for the Turpin boys, and two pistols lurk in the sword cases; a lamp shines on each side the coach, for it is getting dark now, and one is gleaming out under the footboard. In less than a minute, while three greys and a piebald (full of power and condition, with a sprinkling of blood in them) have replaced the three chestnuts and a bay, the coachman has asked a few rapid questions and given a few rapid directions. "Put the bay mare near wheel this evening, and the stallion up to the cheek."

The ostler is fastening the last buckle; the coachman's foot is already on the roller bolt—the last step but one to the box.

"How is Paddy's leg?" Tom says this as he settles down to his seat and shakes out the reins.

"Nearly right, sir," replies the horse-keeper, nattily twitching off the last horse-cloth.

"Let 'em go, then," says the great artist, "and take care of yourselves."

The spankers strike out and away they do go, over what coachmen call "the hospital ground," from Hounslow to Staines. The coachmen generally *sprang* their cattle over this bit of level, where there is no pebble bigger than a nutmeg. In those days they kept for this busy work all the "box-kickers" and the stiff-mouthed old platers, whose backs would not hold an ounce down hill or draw an ounce up—queer tempered creatures, that were over the pole one day and over the bars the next. So flash they used to go past the clump of Scotch firs where Mr. Steel was murdered, and the pond where Mr. Mellish was killed, and by the turn where Courthorpe Knatchbull beat off four scoundrels, and by the place where Turpin, according to Mr. Samuel Weller, let fly at the bishop's too hasty coachman:

> "And put a couple of balls in his nob,
> And perwailed on him to stop."

The coachman has much to say of these events, and recites legends of highwaymen from the time of Du Val downwards. Fast they fly past the gibbets creaking in the night wind, but, Lord bless you! there's

no danger with such an artist and such cattle as the guard reminds you, for the axletrees are of the best K. Q. iron, fagotted edgeways and well bedded in the timbers, and the wheels have no linch pins but the best patent boxes. Faster soon when the nags' collars get warm to their shoulders and they begin to feel their legs. No horse harnessed to this coach ever walked a yard between Hounslow and Exeter. It is all trotting ground; in 1780 the coaches along this road used to effect the hundred and seventy miles from London to Exeter in a fortnight; while the Devonport mail in 1835 used to do the same distance in seventeen hours.

But before we take down more highwaymen from their gibbets, let us recall two earlier legends of Hounslow, which have a quaintness and pathos of their own, and lie still embalmed like dry flowers between the dry, yellow pages of the Chronicles. The first is an anecdote of the Bulstrode family, and dates back to the heroic ages of history. The Bulstrodes, remember, were always great people at Hounslow, and there are monuments to them still in the church.

The grotesque old story runs thus: The Bulstrodes family name was originally Shobbington. They were neighbours of the Hampdens and Penns in Buckinghamshire, and long resisted all the Conqueror's endeavours to seize and divide their estates. At last, William, never disposed to stand much non-

sense, sent a thousand mailed men to put down these sturdy and rebellious Saxons. Shobbington and some of his friends had however broken in bulls, on which they rode instead of horses; and on these strange and dangerous steeds they sallied out at night and met, charged, and dispersed the Norman robbers. William, astonished at the courage of his brave enemies, at once sent for Shobbington, giving him safe escort. The stubborn Saxon warrior appeared before William seated on his bull.

"King," said the hero, "my ancestors owned this land for centuries, and I will die defending it; but if you will grant me but its safe use, I will serve you as faithfully as I have done the Saxon kings before you."

William, honouring the courage of the man, at once gave him his inheritance. From that day the Saxon acquired the name of Bulstrode, or the man that bestrode the bull, and the crest of the family has ever since been a bull's head. Centuries afterwards a descendant of the brave Bulstrode, who had been our envoy at Brussels, died at St. Germains, aged a hundred and one, so there must have been great vigour and lasting about the stock. Centuries afterwards Hampden, a descendant of a comrade of the first Bulstrode, drove back the cavaliers at the adjoining village of Brentford, and so saved London from King Charles. The next year he died like a

patriot at Chalgrove Field, so that Bulstrode's companions were also, it would be seen, a stalwart race, lovers of liberty and haters of oppression by right of their blood.

A descendant of this brave Bulstrode was a chief justice in the reign of Charles the First, who highly respected him. The son of the justice was Cromwell's right hand, his lord chancellor and our ambassador in Sweden. He had a narrow squeak for it at the Restoration, but Charles the Second good-humouredly and somewhat contemptuously dismissed him to his Wiltshire property, telling him to no more trouble himself about state affairs, but to go home and take care of his wife and his sixteen children. Then the hero for a time seemed to deteriorate after remaining so pure and vigorous for centuries, for one of the race was that (to say the least) blundering and incompetent general Whitelocke, who led our men in the miserable rout and disgraceful retreat at Buenos Ayres; but the family still stuck to law and reached high posts in it, for it was on his way from Cranford at the end of the heath, to dine with a Justice Bulstrode, whose house was on the site of the new churchyard at Hounslow, that Lord Berkeley was met and stopped by an unfortunate highwayman, whom he shot. The spot, Mr. Grantly Berkeley says, in his Reminiscences of a Huntsman, is now the centre of almost a town.

The next tradition of Hounslow is a more reliable one, and addresses itself strongly to the human heart. During those cruel wars that brought the King's army and the Parliamentarians alternately to encamp on Hounslow Heath, a Mr. George Trevelyan, a cavalier gentleman of Nettlecomb, in Somersetshire, suspected of plotting against Cromwell, was seized by Puritan soldiers, and sent as a close prisoner to the Tower. His captors, before they left, took care, moreover, to burn and destroy all they could; and, above all, they drove off with them from the stables and fields of Nettlecomb and its neighbourhood every horse that would mount a dragoon, or drag a cannon or baggage waggon. Leaving the house beggared, ransacked, and defaced, and, singing their sullen psalms, they rode off with their mournful captor. Heaven and earth was moved for Trevelyan's release by his devoted wife, but Cromwell, bent on breaking such stubborn spirits, would not listen to any ransom less than two thousand pounds. But where to get it? The steward racked his brains, and the poor wife prayed ceaselessly for help in that her great need. Farms were at last sold, old oaks felled, heirlooms, dear from all tender memories, beaten down for the goldsmith and the Jews; above all, as the old paper especially records, "the great Barley Mow" was thrashed out. At last the two thousand gold pieces were spread by the delighted steward be-

fore the eyes of the tearful wife. The great difficulty now, however, was how to get the bags of gold safe up to London, how to escape the predatory bands, the hungry highwaymen of Bagshot and Hounslow, the rapacious constables of hostile towns, and the stray snatchers in inn yards? The brave yet tender-hearted woman was in despair. At last Heaven sent a thought down to her heart as from some sunbeam. She had heard of rough country roads, where ladies had harnessed strong draught oxen to the cumbrous family coach to drag it through sloughs and deep-rutted lanes to some great dance or solemn assembly. The horses were all stolen for miles round. God would help her; invisible angels would urge forward the slow steeds on their errand of love and mercy. The thought was at once turned to action. The great "gold" coach was provisioned for the long journey; the ark was launched amid the shouts of the men and the cries of the weeping women. The faithful steward, true as steel, accompanied her, and the oxen took twenty-eight days doing the hundred and sixty miles.

We fly over that distance now, swift as the crow flies, in a few hours. The dark prison doors flew open at the first chink of the gold. Cromwell's iron face doubtless relaxed into a smile of approval when he heard the story. The loving wife soon flew into the arms of the free man. Heaven was loath, perhaps, to see

such great love chill or lessen. The blow came—on her way home, joyful and supremely happy, the poor wife (weakened, perhaps, by the recent mental and physical strain) sickened of the small-pox at Hounslow, the first halting place for her swift horses as it had been the last for her slow oxen, and died breathing the name which had been the watchword of her great devotion. She was buried at Hounslow, on the site of the home of the old Brotherhood of the Trinity, who devoted their lives to the redeeming of captives; and in the church a simple tablet still exists to her memory, telling only the fact of her burial and the names of her children. Let the cold cynic sneeringly presume that the husband almost instantly married again, and never cared to erect a costly tomb of alabaster in memory of that brave and pure woman, it is only for us to record the heroism of her deed, and to record on earth what we may be sure has been long since registered in heaven. There are many European shrines of undeserving saints that still blaze with diamonds and glow with gold, but they are raised, we feel sure, above no nobler heart than that which turned to dust long centuries ago beneath the stone floor of the church of Hounslow.

From the earliest ages Hounslow Heath was a notorious ride for highwaymen. Whether Claude Duval, that gallant gentleman's footman who ended a long career of audacity by being trapped at the

Hole in the Wall in Chandos-street, really made the knight's lady dance a coranto on the heath, and then charged the husband a hundred pounds for the dance, history has not recorded; but this is certain, that the Captain Hind who tried to stop Cromwell, and did rob Bradshawe, the so-called regicide, infested this wild common. The gallant captain, a murderer, like most others of these foolishly applauded scoundrels, was eventually hanged at Worcester, and his vile head set up over the bridge gate as a scarecrow to gentlemen of his kidney. A cynical ballad writer says of him,

> "Hind made our wealth his common store;
> He robbed the rich to feed the poor,
> What did immortal Cæsar more?"

This rogue had fought for the king at Worcester, and when the hue and cry was hot after him, artfully and daringly came to London, called himself Brown, changed his wig, dyed his face, and took lodgings at a barber's opposite St. Dunstan's Church; but the worthless barber betrayed the gallant rogue, and Hind swung for it. A foolish and mischievous enchantment for boys, 'prentices, maidservants, and pickpockets has been thrown over these men of Hounslow Heath. It was the same ghastly old story with all of them. They began by hanging together, and they ended by hanging separately. There was seldom great daring in their robberies.

They had houses of intelligence, ostlers, drivers of waggons and packhorses, innkeepers, barmaids, turnpike men, and carriers in their pay. They did not attack armed men if they could help it, and when they did they generally took them by surprise, or fell on them in overpowering numbers. They obtained heavy purses and rich boxes of plate sometimes, but then they had to cast gold away by handfuls to their spies and to the constables who tolerated them or aided their escapes. Wild drinking and gambling were the desperate reactions from their dangers, their days of starvation and short commons. Soon came the desperate gallops, the reckless short cuts, the flying of gates and brooks, the fording of rivers to get by moonlight to Hounslow, every bridle path, and field, and hedge, of which place highwaymen of the district knew by heart. They dashed up to a coach and exchanged shots, or they rammed their pistols through the glass windows, and frightened the ladies into fits and the men into trembling obedience. The watches were drawn from the boots, the jewels from under the cushions; they tossed the spoil into their deep pannier pockets, cursed, threatened, and dashed off. Presently they were leaped on in a brandy shop parlour, or torn down after a savage hue and cry through Hounslow and Brentford, felled by some despairing man, or betrayed by some jealous mistress. Last of all came the

cold, hard jury and the steel-faced judge, the dim stone room, the staring and mocking faces of quidnuncs and heartless men of fashion, the last revel with the turnkey and perhaps the chaplain (for they were odd times), then the hammering off of the chains, the presentation of the nosegay, the bellmen's mechanical verses, and the final grim ride backwards up Holborn Hill to green, airy Tyburn, where the gibbet reared its ghastly hulk. The short-lived, vulgar romance was over.

In the reign of William and Mary, Hounslow trembled at the name of Whitney. Like his successor, Turpin, this rogue began life as a butcher, then kept an inn in Hertfordshire. One of his great robberies was from a celebrated London usurer who lived in the Strand. The best story told of this thief is that one day he robbed a gentleman named Long of a hundred pounds in silver. The gentleman represented that he had far to go and did not know where to get money on the road. Whitney at once opened the bag and handed it to him. Long could not resist the opportunity, and drew out a brimming handful. Whitney did not remonstrate, but only said with a smile, as he rode off, "I thought you would have had more conscience, sir." Whitney was at last trapped in a house in Milford Lane, and died in his shoes at a place called Porter's Block, near Smithfield. He was only thirty-four; highwaymen

seldom attained old age. The trades of a thief and soldier are too dangerous when united for any man's longevity. No office, however bold, would have insured a highwayman.

Some heroes get their fame very undeservedly. This is especially the case with Mr. Richard Turpin, who was but a mean and cruel sort of thief, let alone a murderer. He was simply an Essex butcher, who turned housebreaker; and he and his gang had a cave in Epping Forest, where they and their horses hid and lay in ambuscade. Turpin's daring ride into Yorkshire (really a myth of far earlier date) to prove an alibi, his accidentally shooting his friend King in a fray with the constables in Red Lion Street, Whitechapel, his arrest for a mere quarrel about killing a fowl, above all, and last of all, his fearless and shameless death at York, and the procession of the townspeople with his dead body, drew undeserved attention to his exploits. The street ballad writer of 1739, who was a poor creature compared with the lyrical poet Sam Weller quoted, sings:

"On Hounslow Heath, as I rode o'er,
I spied a lawyer riding before.
'Kind sir,' said I, 'aren't you afraid
Of Turpin, that mischievous blade?'
O rare Turpin, hero! O rare Turpin, O!

Says Turpin, 'He'll ne'er find me out;
I've hid my money in my boot.'
'Oh,' says the lawyer, 'there's none can find
My gold, for it's stitched in my cape behind.'
O rare Turpin, &c.

As they rode down by the Powder Mill,
Turpin commands them to stand still.
Said he, 'Your cape I must cut off,
For my mare she wants a saddle cloth.'

This caused the lawyer much to fret,
And Turpin robbed him of his store,
Because he knew he'd lie for more."

The writer then relates more exploits equally creditable, and asserts that Turpin was a noble fellow, without fear, who fairly fought the men he robbed for their gold, and ends with this assertion:

"But if he had his liberty,
And were upon yon mountains high,
There's not a man in Old England
Dare bid bold Turpin for to stand.
O firm Turpin, hero! O rare Turpin, O!"

It deserves mention, as a curious trait of the times, that Turpin was allowed to hold half an hour's conversation with the hangman before he took his leap from the ladder.

John Hawkins, a wretch that fed the Hounslow crows in 1722, was one of the greatest robbers of mail coaches on record. He stole the bags of five in one morning, of two the next day, and of one the next. The rascal's pack was even so audacious as to stop coaches in Chancery Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields. The gang used to go and dine at the "Three Pigeons," at Brentford; then ride on about six in the evening to the Post House at Hounslow, or to Colebrook, where they would stop on horseback and

learn at what hour the mails were due. The hue and cry must have been often roused in those days by angry travellers who had been robbed on the heath.

It was by no means uncommon in the reign of the early Georges for ruined gamblers and bankrupt tradesmen to take a moonlit ride to the heath to retrieve their shattered fortunes; and in 1750, it is on record that William Parson, the wild son of a baronet, a rake-hell who had been brought up at Eton, and had been both in the Navy and Army, committed a robbery on the fatal heath, after his return from transportation, and was hanged there in chains to scare the night riders.

But travellers had their artifices as well as highwaymen. Men of audacity, who were "Yorkshire too," when stopped, had sometimes the audacity to pretend to be fellow thieves, and were allowed to pass on toll free. On this excuse they would ride off, lamenting their bad luck at not having taken a single purse that night. On one occasion a bold officer in the Army, feeling sure the coach in which he was would be stopped, hid himself in the *basket*, and on two highwaymen riding up, shot one through the head, and drove off the other after an exchange of shots. In later times, Townshend, the celebrated Bow Street runner, used to frequently ride as an armed escort to coaches conveying Government money. Townshend

was a little fat man, who wore a flaxen wig, kerseymere breeches, a blue, straight cut coat, and a broad-brimmed white hat. He was daring, dexterous, and cunning, and his quaint manners and odd sayings were much relished by the Royal Family. On one occasion, Townshend had to escort a carriage to Reading, and took with him his friend, Joe Manton, the celebrated gunmaker, who was fond of adventure, and as brave as a lion. Soon after reaching Hounslow, three footpads stopped the coach, and Joe was just going to draw trigger, when Townshend cried out, "Stop, Joe; don't fire! Let *me* talk to the gentlemen." A glimpse of the moon revealed Townshend's dreaded figure to the thieves, who instantly took to their heels; but he had already recognised them. In a few days his rough and ready hand was on their collars, and the rogues were soon tried and packed off to Botany Bay, to lament the unlucky ending of their adventure on the heath.

There is a legend at Hounslow that a certain Bishop of Raphoe was once shot on the heath, being mistaken for a highwayman. John Rann (alias Sixteen-string Jack), acquired a name, about 1774, at which Hounslow postilions might indeed tremble. The fellow had been coachman to Lord Sandwich, who then lived at the south-east corner of Bedford-row, and acquired his singular name by wearing breeches with eight coloured strings at either

knee, to triumphantly record the number of his acquittals. He was a handsome, impudent fellow, much admired by his companions; and he is described on one occasion as swaggering at Bagnigge-wells in a scarlet coat, deep-flapped satin waistcoat, white silk stockings, and laced hat. He drank freely there, and lost, with extreme nonchalance, a hundred-guinea diamond ring, openly boasting that he was a highwayman, and could replace the lost trinket by one evening's work. He once showed himself at Barnet races in a blue satin wastcoat trimmed with silver, and was followed by an admiring crowd. He even had the matchless impudence to attend a Tyburn execution, and push his way through a ring of constables, saying that he was just the sort of man who ought to have a good place, as he might figure there some day.

Just before he was taken for robbing a gentleman near the ninth milestone on the Hounslow road, he had stopped Dr. Bell, the chaplain to the Princess Amelia, and taken from him eighteenpence and an old watch. This fellow Rann used to boast that Sir John Fielding's people always used him very genteelly, and therefore directly they held up a finger he followed them as quiet as a lamb. He would stop sometimes at a toll-bar, and cry out to the man as he dashed through or over,

"I am Sixteen-string Jack, the famous highway-

man; and if Sir John Fielding's people come after me, tell them the wrong way."

When brought before Sir John, Rann wore a bundle of flowers as big as a broom in the breast of his coat, and had his irons tied up tastefully with blue ribbons. At his trial he appeared in a pea-green suit, a ruffled shirt, and a hat bound round with silver strings. He gave a large supper to his mistresses a few nights before his execution. An intelligent observer, who saw the cart pass the end of John-street with Rann in it bound to Tyburn, describes him in his pea-green coat, carrying, as he sat on his coffin, the chaplain reading prayers to him, an enormous nosegay, which some frail beauty had presented him, according to custom, from the steps of St. Sepulchre's Church. Nothing in life, however, so well became Sixteen-string Jack as the leaving it; for he died penitently, not like desperate Jim Abershaw, the rascal who shot the traveller through the back of the postchaise, and who, on mounting the gibbet so long greedy for him, kicked his shoes off among the crowd, and then leaped savagely into another world.

It is interesting to remember that the first suggestion of the Beggar's Opera was a remark of Swift's, as he sat with his friends, the fat bard and the hunchbacked poet, one day in Pope's villa at Twickenham. Hounslow Heath then spread within a quarter of a mile of Twickenham. Guy must often have seen

flying highwaymen chase past the door. And the song,

> "Hark! I hear the sound of coaches!
> The hour of attack approaches!"

was inspired by the traditions of the neighbourhood. Fielding, writing in 1775, does not say much for the moral tone of the Hounslow population at that time. He describes a captain of the Guards, who, being robbed on Hounslow Heath, directly the highwayman left, unharnessed a horse, mounted it, and pursued the fellow, at noon day, through Hounslow town, shouting, "Highwayman! highwayman!" but no one joined in the pursuit, so accustomed were the people to the visits of mounted thieves. Fielding did much to stop highwaymen by always tracing out the places where they had hired their horses. In 1805, horse patrols were placed on all roads beyond five miles from London; their beat extended to the twentieth milestone from the metropolis.

There was always blood, bad or good, being spilled on Hounslow Heath; but in 1802 a terrible crime, for a long time hidden in mystery, threw a darker gloom over the ill-omened gibbet ground. Mr. Steele, a lavender merchant, in Catherine-street, Strand, who had a house and nursery-ground at Feltham, quitted town for the latter place on the afternoon of the fifth of November. About seven o'clock on the evening of the sixth, he left Feltham, on his way back to

London, wearing a round hat, almost new, half boots, and a great-coat. He was never seen alive again. About a quarter past eight, the driver of the Gosport coach, about ten minutes after changing horses at Hounslow, and when between some trees near the powder mills and the eleventh milestone, heard a man moaning as if in distress, and utter several groans. On the tenth of November the body of the murdered man was found in a ditch some little distance off the road, towards the barracks. The back part of the skull was beaten in, and there was a strap drawn tight round the neck. A bludgeon lay near the body, while a pair of shoes, and an old soldier's hat, with worsted binding, were also found near the spot. No clue was obtained to the crime till the end of 1806, when a deserter named Hatfield, just sentenced to the hulks for theft, confessed the crime. Holloway and Haggarty, two labourers, had proposed to murder him while they were drinking together at the *Turk's Head*, in Dyot-street. Haggarty, since the crime, a marine in the Shannon frigate, was apprehended at Deal. When asked where he had been that time four years, he turned pale and almost fainted. Hatfield proved that Holloway killed Mr. Steele because he struggled so much just as a coach was approaching. Holloway had carried off Mr. Steele's hat, and worn it about London, till at last, implored by Hatfield, he one day filled it with stones

and threw it over Westminster Bridge. The booty was only twenty-seven shillings. The three murderers drank at the Bell Inn, Hounslow, before they went on to the Heath to intercept Mr. Steele. The way the conviction was after all obtained does not say much for the justice of the early part of the century.

A police officer was placed to listen in a chamber behind the strong-rooms for remanded prisoners at Worship-street.

Haggarty was then heard to say:

"Where did we have the gin the night after we came to town?"

To which Holloway replied:

"At the *Black Horse* in Dyot-street."

The rascals then began to sing and joke about a certain red-nosed beadle of Highgate who had given inconsistent evidence.

The wretches were hanged at Newgate on February 23, 1807. Holloway kept swearing to the last he was innocent, and shouting, "No verdict, no verdict, gentlemen. Innocent, innocent."

The long delay in the arrest of the men and some lingering belief in their innocence had attracted forty thousand people to the narrow defile of the Old Bailey. When the malefactors—Haggarty in a rough olive-coloured great-coat, and Holloway in a smock, still shouting "Innocent"—appeared on the scaffold the mob seethed like a black and angry sea. A strug-

gle for life began, and several women and boys were instantly crushed to death. A savage trampling fight for room ensued, cruel and relentless as amongst so many maddened oxen. At the end of Green Arbour-court, nearly opposite the debtor's door of Newgate, a pieman unfortunately dropped his basket, and many persons falling over this, were instantly trampled to death. A cart overloaded with spectators also breaking down just then, added to the horror and despair of the scene. The episodes were agonising. A father saw his son, a fine boy of twelve, trodden to death, while he himself escaped with only some cruel bruises. A woman with a child at the breast, in dying, threw her child to a bystander, who threw it to another and another, until it reached some people in a waggon, who saved it. This convulsive and ferocious struggle for life continued an hour; the constables then cut down the malefactors, and cleared the streets. Nearly a hundred persons were found dead or dying. Twenty-seven bodies were taken to St. Bartholomew's Hospital alone. Others were placed in St. Sepulchre's church. One poor mother was seen carrying away the body of her dead boy. A poor sailor lad was found, his dead hand still clutching a bag of bread and cheese. Upwards of a cart-load of shoes, hats, and petticoats were picked up. The bodies at St. Bartholomew's were ranged along a ward to be recognised by their friends; for mothers

weeping for their sons, wives for their husbands, sisters for their brothers, soon besieged the place.

Haggarty and Holloway, no doubt, hung in chains near the clump of trees where they had waited for their victim. These gibbets, both on the Staines Road, were eventually removed, because they were disagreeable to the Royal Family when on their way to Windsor; but the exact date of the removal is unknown to us.

Two earlier legends of the heath must not be forgotten. In James the First's time (December 5, 1606), two young hot-blooded lawyers fought a duel alone in a wild part of the heath. They were found, side by side, each having spitted the other with his rapier. In their common misfortune the men had become friends, though too weak from loss of blood to help each other. Three years before this, Sir John Townshend (knighted at the siege of Cadiz by the rash but chivalrous Earl of Essex) fought a duel here on horseback with Sir Matthew Brown, Baron of Beechworth—sword and pistol. Both combatants were dangerously wounded in this desperate and fierce rencontre, Sir Matthew dying on the spot, and Sir John Townshend soon after. Sir John was an ancestor of the present marquis, whose eccentric crusades against London beggars has rendered him so valuable to the Mendicity Society, of which he is, we believe, an active member.

CHAPTER III.

BEDFONT TO WINDSOR.

HIGH and swift up in the soft blue air, with glossy black wings fanning out in the sunshine, the little clear telescope glasses of his keen eyes glancing from grey church-tower to manor-house roof, the crow passes over Middlesex, which spreads below a great brown and green carpet of dark plough-land and bright pasture, through which the Thames winds like a tangled silver thread. Down from the clouds like a black flake he will drift to any village that has a legend, any town that has a tradition, or even any old house over whose chimney he passes, if the spot has been consecrated by genius, or been associated with any passage of human nature that addresses itself to the human heart. Down he will drop from the nearest white snowdrift of cloud wherever he can find food. His scent will be keen for old legend and odd biographical incident. He will only peer round for a moment, peck an instant, revolve his sagacious eyes,

chatter, then take flight. His course is to be straight, swift, and westward to the sea.

He does not alight at Bedfont, but still he poises his jetty wings over the red roof of that old posting village, because it is there that Tom Hood placed the scene of that quaint and grave little poem of his, "The Two Peacocks of Bedfont," so simple and touching a homily against vanity, and remarkable for that exquisite couplet:

> "And in the garden plot from day to day
> The lily blooms its long white life away."

The poem seems to have arisen from the writer having seen two peacocks strutting in flaunting pride, and displaying their jewelled plumes above the humble grassy graves of Bedfont churchyard. This contrast he surrounded with Stothard-like pictures of a country Sunday; hand-coupled urchins in restrained talk, anxious pedagogue, pompous churchwarden stalking solemnly along, gold-bedizened beadle, passing flaming through the churchyard gate, terribly conscious of the world's approval, and lastly the

> "Gentle peasant, clad in buff and green,
> Like a meek cowslip in the spring serene."

How many points of view there are! The musing poet little thought of what Bedfont had been in the Regency times, when the Four-in-Hand Club used to rattle up to the Black Dog, or whatever the chief inn then was, on their way from their rendezvous in

George Street, Hanover Square, to the Windmill, on Salt-hill. Those were the days when baronets drove coaches, boxed watchmen, smote the Charlies, wore many-caped coats, and were sudden and prompt in quarrel. In those times of broad-brimmed hats, rowdy port-wine bibbing days, Lord Sefton's and Colonel Berkeley's turn-outs were specially superb, the horses perfect, the equipments in the most refined taste. One rule of the club was that no coach should pass another, and that the pace should never exceed a trot. The Four-in-Hand lasted in full vigour for upwards of twenty years. Mr. Akers, one of the most spirited members, in his enthusiastic desire to resemble a regular real coachman—a veritable Weller—filed a circle between his front teeth, to enable him to whistle to his nags in the orthodox manner. It was not a very high ambition, but still it led Mr. Akers to a coach-box, and left him there firmly planted, and a great man at Bedfont, when the Four-in-Hand Club stopped on a wet evening for glasses of "screeching hot" mahogany-coloured brandy-and-water round, Bob Akers must have been. Sir Bellingham Graham, Mr. Cholmondely, and the prince's friend, Sir John Lade, who drove the Regent's bays in the most perfect style, were prominent men in the club, and a gentlemanlike procession it must have formed through Bedfont and Hounslow, wondered at by ostlers, gloried in by grooms, envied by mail coachmen. The only

wonder is that, after those dinners at the Windmill, and several bottles of crusty old port, the Four-in-Hand Club did not sometimes race back through Bedfont and beat each other's vehicles into hearses.

Up in the air again the crow darts, and a few quick pulses of his coal black wings bring him to Staines. Antiquaries derive the name of this town from a "stane" or big stone which makes the western bounds of the jurisdiction of the Corporation of London. Lord mayors bygone, forgotten aldermen, in red robes and chains, used to make great days of the swan-upping, coming in gay barges on August afternoons past Staines to their annual dinners at Medmenham. The Thames swans are chiefly the property of the Dyers' and Vintners' Companies. The swans build in the aits about Henley, and in the osier beds by the river. Firm structures of twigs cradle their huge eggs, and each pair of beetle-browed birds have their own special walk or district, which they guard from all intruders, being as pugnaciously jealous of their right as country gentlemen. They have keepers, too, who receive a small sum for every cygnet that is reared, and it is these men's duty to guard the nests and eggs, and even to build the foundations of the nests. The mark of the Vintners' Company is two nicks, which mark originates the well-known London sign of "The Swan with Two Necks," or nicks. The upping festivals used to begin on the Monday after

Saint Peter's day. The swans are very strong, and it is said to be exceedingly dangerous to scuffle with them at the turns of the river; the markers, therefore, use strong crooks.

Now the crow mounts again with his glossy wings bound to that little green meadow island on the Thames where King John signed Magna Charta, forced by his barons, who had gathered together at Hounslow under pretence of a tournament. Here once sounded across the river those memorable words:

"No free man shall be apprehended, imprisoned, disseized, outlawed, banished, or in any way destroyed; nor will we go upon him, nor will we send after him, excepting by the legal judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land. To no man will we sell, to no man will we deny or delay right and justice."

O high Court of Chancery! O patient and suffering suitors! O grim law-haunted houses, dumb and blind in the midst of crowded streets, have either our kings or nobles ever obeyed this solemn clause? Lawyers, go pay a pilgrimage to the green race meadow of Egham and there repent of your sins and the shortcomings of tardy justice. We always picture to ourselves that scene at Runnymede as a sort of royal pic-nic. The scowling king is signing papers under a striped cricket marquee, the surly barons, archers, and men-at-arms lie in groups on the grass, round their venison pasties. That meeting at Runnymede ended

as it began, with a tournament In less than a year the faithless king had broken all his promises, and Louis of France had landed at Dover as the ally of the enraged Barons.

From Runnymede to the royal battlements of the "proud keep of Windsor," is but a short flight. The very prettiest legend existing about Windsor is connected with the little garden at the foot of the proud tower, where the crow first alights, and from which tower twelve tributary counties can be seen in clear weather. A young Scotch Prince sent to France, to be out of the way of his dangerous uncle, the Duke of Albany, was captured off the coast of Norfolk, 1405, and sent to Windsor, where he remained a prisoner eighteen years. In his poem, the King's Quhair, Prince James has described how he fell in love with Lady Jane Beaufort, as she walked in this garden, unconscious of the admiration of the young prisoner. The garden, he says, had an arbour in the corner, it was railed in with wands and close knit hawthorn bushes, and in the midst of every arbour was "a sharpe, greene, sweete juniper," and he could hear the nightingale singing on the boughs. Suddenly, the prisoner's eyes fell on

> "The fairest and the freshest younge flower,
> That ever I saw methought before that hour,
> For which sudden abate anon astart
> The blood of all my body to my heart."

The enraptured youth then goes on to describe the

dress of the maiden, her golden hair fretted with pearls, fiery rubies, emeralds, and sapphires, and on her head a chaplet of plumes, red, white, and blue with quaking spangles. Here is a pretty touch; he says about her neck there hung a fine gold chain, with a ruby in the shape of a heart:

> "That as a spark of fire so wantonly.
> Seemed burning upon her white throat."

But, suddenly, the fair, fresh face passed under the boughs, out of sight, then began the lover's torments, and his day suddenly darkened into night. Altogether, a prettier love story is not to be found in all the Castle history. James eventually married this incomparable lady, a niece of the Cardinal, and daughter of the Earl of Somerset, and took her back with him to Scotland. The accomplished prince was eventually assassinated in Perth, in 1437.

At the old deanery door took place the pathetic parting between Richard the Second and his young Queen Isabella, then only eleven years of age. Froissart says, when the canons had chanted very sweetly, the king having chanted a collect and made his offerings, took his child-queen in his arms and kissed her twelve or thirteen times, saying, sorrowfully, "Adieu, madame, until we meet again." Then the queen began to weep, saying: "Alas, my lord, will you leave me here?" The king's eyes filled with tears, and he replied: "By no means, ma mye; but I

will go first, and you, ma chère, shall come afterwards." After that the king and queen partook of wine and comfits at the Deanery with their court. Presently the king stooped down, lifted the queen in his arms, and kissed her at least ten times, saying: "Adieu, ma chère, until we meet again." He then placed her on the ground again, and kissed her more. "By our Lady," adds the chronicler, "I never saw so great a lord make so much of, or show such affection to a lady, as did King Richard to his queen. Great pity it was they separated, for they never saw each other more." Soon after came the cruel struggle at Pontefract, and the weeping child became a widow.

The glory of that warrior king, Edward the Third, still radiant at the Castle, was pre-eminent the year that he founded the Order of the Blue Garter; when having royally sent heralds to invite lordly guests from France, Scotland, Burgundy, Hainault, Flanders, Brabant, and the Empire of Germany, he offered to all knights and squires fifteen days' passport after the feasting was over, and these rejoicings ended by a declaration of war with France. King Edward's sword, so often raised against Frenchmen, is still preserved in the Chapter House.

It was in St. George's Chapel that, in 1813, the body of King Charles the First was discovered. Charles the Second had pretended to search for it, but probably did not wish to find it, and incur the cost of

a sumptuous monument. The corpse had been carried to the grave in 1648 in a snow storm, and the "martyr" obtained secretly the name of "the white king" among his adherents, from the fact of the snow settling white upon the pall. There was no service read over the body, as the Puritan governor forbade Bishop Prescott to use the Church of England prayers. There was nothing said, but the spectators observed the bishop's lips move slowly. When the coffin was opened the face was found dark and discoloured, the forehead and mouth retained little of their muscular substance; the cartilage of the nose was gone, and the left eye, though open and full at the first exposure, vanished almost immediately. The shape of the face was long, the nearly black hair was thick at the back of the head, the beard a reddish brown. On holding up the head, the muscles of the neck showed contraction, and the fourth cervical vertebra had been cut through transversely, leaving the severed surfaces smooth and even. The appearance was such as a blow from a heavy axe would have produced. In this chapel of Saint George sleep many kings and queens; Jane Seymour, for instance, and Henry the Eighth, by his own desire, the hypocrite, "near his true and loving wife, Queen Jane." The gigantic tomb, with six hundred and thirty-four statues, and forty-four histories, which the tyrant ordered, was

never put up. When he was once dead his ungrateful subjects had better things to think of.

Old King George's memory is still held dear at Windsor. Thousands of honest stories of him circulate in the neighbourhood, all showing what a dull, respectable, methodical, worthy old fellow he was. No romance about him. No. He rose at half-past seven, attended service in the chapel, and breakfasted at nine with the queen and the princesses. The meal only lasted half an hour. The princesses were seated according to the severest etiquette. After breakfast the king rode out attended by his equerries and the princesses. If the weather was bad he sat in and played at chess. He dined at two, the queen and princesses at four. At five the king visited the queen, and took a glass of wine and water. He then transacted private business with his secretary. The evening was spent at cards, visitors retiring when the castle clock struck ten, and always supperless, as they took very good care to remember. The family withdrew at eleven o'clock for the night. Such was King George's daily routine.

We all know from Peter Pindar, that cruel satirist, who was, by-the-by, by no means reluctant to be bought off, how the old king chattered, asked foolish questions, and answered them himself. The monarch's simple adventures are still narrated in many Windsor farms, and they all show the same prosy, amiable,

unpretending, common-place man. One day he had to pass a narrow gate, on which a ploughboy sat luxuriantly swinging.

"Who are you, boy?" said the king. "I be a pig boy. I be from the low country, and out of work at present." "Don't they want lads here?" asked the king. "I don't know," replied the boy. "All hereabouts belongs to Georgey." "And who is Georgey?" "Georgey! Why, the king; he lives at the castle yonder, but he does no good for me." The king instantly ordered the boy to be employed on his farm, and promised to look after him. He turned out a steady lad. The king once went into a cottage and began turning the meat for an old woman, and was so pleased with himself for doing it, and the amusement he had derived, that he left on the rude table five guineas to buy a jack, wrapped up in the paper with that notification. There was no romance about George, but he was very kind-hearted. Once he and Queen Charlotte met a little boy—"the king's beefeater's little boy." The king said, "Kneel down and kiss the queen's hand." But the boy was obdurate and determined. "No," said he, "I won't kneel; for if I do I shall spoil my new breeches." The old Guelph was obstinate and pig-headed, but he could bend to common sense sometimes. One day Colonel Price differed with him about cutting down a certain tree which did or did not injure the prospect. "Price," said the

King, pettishly, "that's your way; you continually contradict me." "If your Majesty," replied the sensible colonel, "will not condescend to listen to the honest sentiments of your servants, you can never hear the truth." After a short pause the king kindly laid his hand on the colonel's shoulder, and said, "You are right, Price; the tree shall stand." When Prince George was a boy Handel had noticed his fondness for music, and the taste continued till his death. Even when old, crazed, and blind, wandering up and down the corridors of Windsor dressed in a purple dressing-gown, his long white beard falling on his breast, he used at lucid intervals to sing a hymn, and accompany himself on the harpsichord. One day towards the end of his life, in a lucid moment, the king heard a bell toll. He asked who was dead. He was told it was a Mrs. S. The monarch had a great memory—memory is almost a royal prerogative—he immediately said: "Ah! she was a linen-draper at the corner of —— Street. She was a good woman, and brought up her children in the fear of God. She is gone to heaven. I hope I shall soon follow her." Latterly the old king became impressed with a sense that he was dead, and used to say, "I must have a suit of black in memory of King George the Third, for whom I know there is a general mourning." He would often hold conversation with imaginary noblemen, but the topics to which he re-

ferred were generally past events. Sometimes he would sit for hours in a torpor, his head resting on both hands; often he would make his servants sit down, and addressed them as if he was in Parliament.

At last, in 1820, Death came mercifully, and gave the word of release. The lying-in-state was in the Audience Chamber, where the yeomen of the guard stood, their halberts hung with black crape. The coffin was placed under a throne hung with black cloth. Two heralds in tabards sat at the foot of the coffin, and the mourners at the head. When all the public had been admitted the Eton boys were allowed to pass through the rooms. The funeral by night, was magnificent and solemn. The procession was marshalled in St. George's Hall, the Duke of York being chief mourner. About nine o'clock the symphony to the Dead March in Saul reverberated mournfully, the trumpets sounded, and the minute guns thundered at intervals. As the coffin passed by every spectator stood uncovered. The torchlight that lit the earnest faces, gleamed on the towers, pinnacles, and battlements of the Castle. A detachment of the Grenadier Guards lined the aisle, their arms and standards reversed, every second man carrying a lighted wax taper. The van was headed by the Poor Knights and the pages. Then came judges, bishops, privy counsellors, and peers. Dukes bore the pall, marquisses supported the canopy over

the coffin. The national banners were borne by noblemen. As soon as the coffin appeared the choir began the anthem: "I know that my Redeemer liveth." The Duke of York followed the coffin, and with him came the Duke of Clarence, the Duke of Sussex; the Duke of Gloucester and Prince Leopold. There was an irresistible thrill of awe when the coffin slowly sank into the vault, and the handful of dust clattering on it, re-echoed on the lid. The herald then read the titles of the new king. "Le Roi est mort, vive le Roi!"

When George the Fourth grew tired of the frivolous splendour of Brighton, and became afraid of his subjects, he went to live at the Royal Lodge, at the end of the Long Walk. Only a fragment of the house now exists, but there at Virginia Water you can still see the Chinese temple, from the gallery of which George the Fourth used daily to try and amuse himself by angling. He liked to drive about Windsor Park in his pony phaeton, or to be wheeled in a chair round the improvements at the Castle. His last anxiety was about a new dining-room. He was for a long time kept ignorant of his danger. He preserved his seclusion to the last. His thirty miles of avenues were kept sacred to himself. If he had even to cross the Frogmore road, some of his suite were sent forward to watch the gates, and observe if the ways were free from danger. His cottage was

surrounded by trees. The king lived a life of mystery. The first gentleman of Europe was not partial to his devoted subjects.

From the ruins of the Royal Cottage the crow flits back to the terrace, that grand walk where Elizabeth has often paced tremendous in her ruff, and Charles, of the melancholy countenance, has denounced Pym and Vane. It was here old King George used to show himself, with that simple dignity that won the Windsor people. Miss Burney describes one particularly pretty scene on the terrace, when the little Princess Amelia, so beloved by the King, was of the party, "just turned of three years old, in a robe coat covered with fine muslin, a dressed close cap, white gloves, and fan, walking alone and fast, highly delighted at the Windsor uniforms, and turning from side to side to see everybody as they passed, for the terracers always stood up against the walls, to make a clear passage for the Royal Family."

A flight across the Home Park brings us to a grand old oak with a railing round it, in a line with an avenue of elms, and not far from the footpath. That is a sacred tree (if, indeed, the real haunted tree was not accidentally cut down, as some suppose, by George the Third, in 1796). Here, most people think, Herne the Hunter, the hero of a curious German kind of legend, used on winter midnights to pace, with ragged horns on his head,

shaking chains, and casting a murrain on cattle. And here Falstaff came disguised, and was fooled, and mocked, and pinched by the mischievous fairies in green, and the swingeing postboy. There used to be an old house in Windsor at the foot of the Hundred Steps, supposed to have been the very house which Shakespeare sketched as that of Mrs. Page.

Who is there that can now tell the crow as he hovers over the Garter Tower, or flits round the Devil's and King John's Towers, where the first Windsor Castle stood? Some say the castle, now existing only in dreamland, stood on the banks of the Thames, two miles east of Windsor, where the ancient palace of Edward the Confessor had been built. Here one day at dinner, Earl Goodwin, whose broad domains are now those thirsty and dangerous sands off Ramsgate, submitted voluntarily to the ordeal of bread. "So may I swallow safe this morsel of bread that I hold in my hand," he said, "as I am guiltless of my brother Alfred's death." He then swallowed the bread, which instantly choked him, so the legend goes, and he, being drawn from the table, was conveyed to Winchester and there buried. A blind woodcutter once came here to beseech the sainted Edward to restore his sight. The king replied, "By our Lady! I shall be grateful if you through my means shall choose to take pity upon a wretched creature," and laying his hand on the

blind man's eyes, instantly restored their sight. The woodman exclaiming, "I see you, O king! I see you, O king!" This absurd custom of "touching" (generally for the evil) continued till Queen Anne's time, to whom Dr. Johnson, when a child, was taken for that purpose. He described her in later life as a stately lady in black velvet and diamonds. In the same palace, in the rough old times, Harold and Tosti, his jealous and choleric brother, fought before King Edward the Confessor. As Harold was about to pledge the King, Earl Tosti seized him by the hair. Harold, not unnaturally resenting this, leaped on Tosti and threw him violently to the ground, when the soldiers parted them. Tosti afterwards joined the Norwegians, invaded Northumberland, and was slain by his brother at Banford Bridge, near York, just as William had landed to render Harold's fratricidal victory useless.

That same iron-handed Norman Conqueror took a journey to Windlesora (the town by the winding river), and first built hunting lodges among the vales, so as to feast in comfort on the deer he had slain; then exchanging some lands in Essex, he acquired the hill above the river, and built a castle there; and at Datchet he broke lances, and flourished about in mail, and bobbed for eels, and generally enjoyed himself. All English Kings have delighted in Windsor Palace. Henry the First was married here. It

was here Henry the Second, bewailing his undutiful children, caused to be painted on a wall—an old eagle with some young ones scratching it, and one of them pecking out his eyes. "This," he said, "betoken my four sons, which cease not to pursue my death, especially my youngest son, John." From these walls this very John rode one June day sullenly to his great mortification at Runnymede.

Edward the Third, that great monarch, was born here, and from the Royal seat that doth commend itself so pleasantly unto the senses, derived his appelation of Edward of Windsor. At the foot of the Slopes was the tournament ground, where he used to cross spears with Chandos and Manney, and display his shield with the white swan and the defiant motto—

"Hay, hay, the white swan,
By Godde's soul, I am thy man."

There is no story connected with Windsor Castle so touching as that of the death-bed of Edward's noble-hearted Queen Philippa,—the most gentle queen, the most liberal and courteous that ever was, as the chroniclers say. When she felt her end approaching, she called to the King, and extending her right hand from under the bed-clothes, placed it in the right hand of the King, who was right sorrowful at his heart. Then she said: "Sir, we have in peace, joy, and great prosperity, lived all our time together.

Sir, now I pray you that at our parting you will grant me three desires." The King, right sorrowfully weeping, exclaimed: "Madam, desire what ye will, I grant it." Then she asked the King to pay all merchants on either side the sea, to whom she owed money; second, to fulfil all vows that she had made to different churches; and, thirdly, that when God called him hence, he would choose no other tomb but hers, and would lie by her side in the cloisters of Westminster. The King, weeping, said: "Madam, I grant all your desires." Then soon after the good lady made the sign of the cross on her breast, and recommending her youngest son, Thomas, to the King, gave up her spirit, which, says Froissart, "I firmly believe was caught by the holy angels and carried straight to the glory of Heaven, for she had never done anything, by thought or deed, that could endanger her losing it. Thus died this Queen of England, in the year of grace, 1369, the vigil of the Assumption of the Virgin, on the 15th of August."

Edward partly rebuilt the palace, his wise prelate, William of Wykeham, being the architect. His huge inscription, "Hoc fecit Wykeham," is still visible in the Winchester Tower. There is an old Egyptian story of an architect of the Pharaohs, who, being forbidden to carve his name on the pyramid he had built, resorted to an artifice. He sculptured the name boldly, then covered it with stucco, on which the

King's emblazoned deeds were written in hieroglyph. In a lifetime or so the stucco fell off, and disclosed the name of the subtle artificer. William of Wykeham was too frank and noble for this; he carved his autograph boldly, and when the King seemed inclined to resent the apparent arrogance, explained that the inscription meant, "the castle had made him." The weak monarch, Henry the Sixth, was also born at Windsor, fulfilling the old prophecy written probably years after:

> "I Henry, born at Monmouth,
> Shall small time reign and much get,
> But Henry of Windsor shall reign long and lose all."

The wicked Crook-back brought this poor man's body to Windsor from Chertsey. A black marble slab still marks his grave. He became the saint of Windsor. The rough-handed ploughmen from the Berkshire villages often came here, with lit tapers and images of wax, forest keepers, their doublets stained with deer's blood and man's blood, often knelt before the small chip of the bedstead of the saintly king; his spur, and his old red velvet hat, supposed to cure headaches. Prayers to Henry were inserted in the service books of the early part of the sixteenth century; the old hat stood high above all the other Windsor relics—yes, even the milk of the Virgin; the skulls of Saint Bartholomew and Thomas, and the bones of St. Osyth, Richard, David,

Margaret of Scotland, William of England, William of York, and Thomas of Canterbury. The grave unites even enemies, for near this Henry the Sixth of Lancaster, lies Edward the Fourth of York; the Red or White Roses have long ceased quarrelling over their graves.

The Royal Tomb House is another centre of great traditions. It was originally intended by Henry the Seventh for his tomb (a grand initiation for the new dynasty) a proud assertion of power and pride even after death. Henry the Eighth, in the plenitude of generosity, gave it to his useful favourite, Wolsey, who began to rebuild it with all the lavish splendour in which he delighted. He had determined to descend into the darkness of a tomb magnificent as that of the popes, to lie in a sarcophagus worthy of the Pharaohs. But the royal favourite fell to the ground. He had to beg a little earth for charity, far away from that royal tomb, which was swept away in contempt by the Parliamentarians, who loathed all such pomps and vanities. The upper part was sold as defaced brass for six hundred pounds, and the black marble sarcophagus lay untenanted, till it was taken for the righteous purpose of covering Nelson's tomb in St. Paul's Cathedral. George the Third eventually constructed the vault beneath the Tomb House for himself and family.

It is a singular proof of how Time will drift together relics from distant lands, that Windsor Castle possesses two relics of Quentin Matsys, the famous blacksmith of Antwerp. On the left of the altar in St. George's Chapel is a screen of Gothic iron, hammered out (carved out with a knife one would think) by Matsys, for the tomb of Edward the Fourth. The King's coat of mail and jewelled surcoat used to hang near it, but the Puritans carried them off when they defaced the chapel in 1643.

In the Queen's closet hangs the second relic, the famous picture of "The Misers," which proved *him* an artist, and obtained him his wife, the daughter of a contemptuous painter. The execution is hard, but it is of great excellence, and the details, such as the bandbox full of old deeds, and the parrot on the perch, are highly curious. The faces are full of character, but the meaning of their expression is disputed. Some think both men are money-lenders, rejoicing in a hard, especially hard bargain; others that one is a merchant, and the other a partner rival or clerk who is outwitting him. After all, the traditional name is probably the true one.

There is a tradition that the upper ward of Windsor Castle was built by Edward the Third from the French king's ransom, and the lower ward remodelled from the ransom of the Scotch monarch. John was shut up in the Round Tower, formerly called La

Rose; David in the south-west tower of the upper ward, a wall being built between the two to form a terrace for meeting.

Of Henry the Eighth, that merry chivalrous king, who degenerated by degrees into such a fat morose sensual tyrant, there is a tradition or two still extant at Windsor. He used to hawk in the Great Park, and there too in the long green glades he held his archery meetings. That was an age when the storms of cloth-yard shafts still sometimes turned a battle, and bluff Hal was anxious to encourage the use of the bow. The bow was still a strong yew shaft, the arrow of enormous size, and the distance shot almost incredible, and at one of these matches one Barlow, a Londoner, shot so far and so true that the laughing king sent him home dubbed "Duke of Shoreditch."

Years after her father's death Elizabeth used to come here and shoot deer with her own cross-bow, not unfrequently cutting the throat of Jacque's favourites with her own hunting knife.

There is still one more tradition of Windsor worth remembering. A public-house in Peascod Street, called the "Duke's Head," was once the house of Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, the Zimri of Dryden. Charles the Second used often, they say, to come from the Castle, and walk from hence with him to "Filberts," the house of Nell Gwynne.

CHAPTER IV.

ETON TO READING AND NEWBURY.

HIGH up in the thin blue air, on black floating wings, the crow skims past the grey stone cottages of Berkshire, dropped down, as Tom Brown says they are, in nooks and out-of-the-way corners, by the sides of shadowy lanes and primeval footpaths, glancing over the snug thatched roofs and little gardens, ill-made roads and great pasture-lands, dotted here and there with clumps of thorns.

Passing by the broad green playing-fields of Eton, where the noble elm-trees sentinel the river, the crow, regarding the Eton men below with benign approval, as the future hope of England, takes the playing-fields as the text for a pleasant school-boy anecdote of 1809, still extant in the school. One morning Shelley, the future poet, then an Eton boy, roused to indignation by an enemy, tossed his long angelic locks, and accepted wage of battle from his foe of the playground, Sir Thomas Styles, a plucky little ur-

chin, far younger and shorter than himself. They were to meet at twelve the same day. The coming battle was the whispered talk of the forms, and directly the rush out of school took place a ring was formed, and seconds and bottle-holders chosen. The tall lean poet towered high above the little thickset baronet. In the first round Sir Thomas felt his way by speculative sparring, while Shelley tossed his long arms in an incoherent manner. When they rested, the baronet sat quietly on the knee of his second, but Shelley, disdainful of such succour, and confident of victory, stalked round the ring and scowled at his adversary. Time was called, and the battle began in earnest. The baronet planted a cautious blow on Shelley's chest. The poet was shaken, but he soon went in and knocked his stubby little adversary down. While Styles lay there half stunned, Shelley spouted Homeric defiances, to the delight of his audience. In the second and last round Styles, however, began to wake up, and eventually delivered a settling "slogger" on Shelley's "bread-basket." It fell on the poet like a thunderbolt; his nervous sensibilities were roused, he broke through the ring and flew, pursued by his seconds and backers with laughter and execrations; but he distanced them all, and got to earth safely at the house of his tutor, Mr. Bethell, whom he soon afterwards nearly blew up with a miniature

steam-engine, which a travelling tinker had manufactured for him.

It was just beyond Datchet Mead, where Falstaff was quoited into the Thames, "like a horse-shoe hissing hot," that old tradition says Sir Izaak Walton used to come from his Fleet Street shop with Sir Henry Wotton, the Provost of Eton, looking for big trout. Worthy old men, full of years, and wise yet kindly knowledge of the world, they used to sit here watching their bobbing floats, baiting hooks, and capping verses, believing that angling, after serious study, was a rest to the mind, "a cheerer of the spirit, a diverter of sadness, a calmer of unquiet thoughts, a moderator of passions, a procurer of contentedness, a begetter of habits of patience and peace." Well might Wotton repeat his own verses here by the river side:

> "Welcome pure thoughts, welcome ye silent groves,
> Those guests, these courts my soul most dearly loves.
> Now the wing'd people of the sky shall sing
> My cheerful anthems to the gladsome spring."

We can fancy, too, the little Eton men of those days, grave, in falling bands and Vandyck dress, coming in long procession over the meadows to ask the provost for a half holiday—Walton, you may be sure, was a warm intercessor for them. Years after Charles the Second and his laughing ladies used to fish at Datchet. We can fancy the Stuart's grim

swarthy face reflected in the water, which glowed with the reflections of duchesses' golden satins and the plumes of Rochester or Buckingham. Pope describes the king,

> "Methinks I see our mighty monarch stand,
> The pliant rod now trembling in his hand;"

and

> "And see, he now doth up from Datchet come
> Laden with spoils of slaughtered gudgeon home."

Our next flight is to Bray, home of that immortal vicar, Simon Alleyn, who, most dexterous of helmsmen, steered his bark safely through the conflicting reigns of Henry the Eighth, when the axe was always ready for malcontents—of Edward the Sixth, when the Tower's dangerous doors so often opened and shut—of Queen Mary, when fires were always ready for heretics—and of Queen Elizabeth, when the rack was always on the strain for conspirators. Alleyn was first a Papist, then a Protestant, next a Papist, and lastly a Protestant again. Worthy bland soul, so ready to explain away his past sermons, and to write fresh ones, what a calm face he must have turned on all violent controversialists! What soft words he must have used to turn away wrath! How difficult he must have found it too to preach his first sermon after a new accession! How he must have exhausted himself in prudent efforts to buy up his last violent invective against the Protestantism newly re-estab-

lished! What confusion he must have got into between gowns and robes! Fuller says the prudent vicar had once seen some martyrs burnt at Windsor, and found the fire too hot for his tender temper. When some ribalds once accused him of being a vile, shameless turncoat, without a conscience, a mere paltry trickster, a poor frightened changeling, who went just which way the wind blew him—

"Nay, nay," said he smiling, "for I have always kept one principle, which is this, whoever rules, to live and die the Vicar of Bray."

We can fancy the Christian calm with which Alleyn, some winter's day, listening at his window, might have heard a brutal ballad-singer from Reading or Oxford, shouting to a rattling old tune the scurrilous ballad written upon him:

"To teach my flock I never missed;
Kings were by God appointed,
And they are damned who dare resist
Or touch the Lord's anointed;
And this in law I will maintain
Until my dying day, Sir,
That whosoever king shall reign,
I'll be the Vicar of Bray, Sir."

The vicar was no hypocrite, however, for he always boldly avowed his principle of keeping office at any price. Glancing on to Maidenhead, we there alight on the chapel roof, to pick up a tradition of another and less lucky vicar of Bray.

James the First one day, when hunting, rode on before his dogs and huntsmen to seek for luncheon. The king sharp set, and speaking Scotch more like Mr. Phelps than usual, dashed up to the inn at Maidenhead, ravenous indeed. Flinging himself off his horse, he shouted for the landlord. Beef and ale—a pasty—anything. The landlord, careless of stray guests, shrugged his shoulders. There was nothing ready but one roast, and the Worshipful Vicar of Bray and his curate were already busy at that; but perhaps, they might (as a favour) allow a stranger to join them. King James, leaping at the offer, strode upstairs, knocked at the door, and asked permission. The vicar churlishly scowled on him from his full and smoking platter. The curate, jovial and hearty, however, begged him to be seated. The king, pleased at the chance of a meal, sat down and played a good knife and fork. He tossed off his ale, told racy stories, and made his reluctant and his willing host roar with laughter. At last there came the "mauvais quart d'heure" of Rabelais; the bill arrived. The curate flung down his money with careless frankness; the vicar paid his shot gloomily. The luckless guest could not pay at all. Eh, mon! he'd left his purse behind him in his other breeks. The vicar seeing no joke in the matter, flatly refused to pay for the suspicious-looking stranger. The happy and guileless curate, on the other hand, expressed his

pleasure in being able to make some return for the amusement he had received, and paid James's bill. Then the three men went out on to the balcony. The huntsman just then came riding up, and seeing James, leaped off his horse and went down upon one knee in the street. The penniless guest was the king. The sullen vicar, throwing himself at the feet of James, implored forgiveness; to which King Jamie replied, with gracious revenge,

"I shall not turn you out of your living, and you shall always remain Vicar of Bray; but I shall make my friend curate here a canon of Windsor, whence he will be able to look down, mon, both upon you and your vicarage."

The crow also takes record of Maidenhead (so called from the head of one of the eleven thousand virgins once preserved here, or from the timber-wharves that existed in the Saxon times) because it boasts a tradition which forms a touching episode in English history. Charles the First, after several years' separation from his children—swarthy little Charles, grave James, and poor little Elizabeth—was allowed to meet them at the Greyhound Inn, at Maidenhead, thanks to the amiability of Lord Fairfax and the kindliness of the army. "The greatest satisfaction the king could have," says Clarendon. Poor king! poor children! The scene is easy to imagine—the long waiting at the window, the eager

looking out from the balcony and the windows, the childish questions, the suspense, the fears, till, at last, a grave, long-faced man, with a peaked beard, a broad-brimmed hat, and with a diamond star on the left breast of his cloak, rides up, and they shout "Father! Father!" as he dismounts and clasps them in his arms.

The town that day was strewn with flowers, the doorways were stuck with green boughs. After dinner the king and his children drove in their cumbrous coach to Caversham, and there they spent two days of unalloyed happiness. No doubt the king there spoke to them of his dangers. "They will cut off my head," he, no doubt, said, as he did to the little Duke of Gloucester a few months afterwards, "and they will want to make thee king; but thou must not be king while Charles and James are alive." How the children must have wondered at the cruelty of the world to so persecute their dear father; how they must have clung to his side, and told him no Roundhead rogue should dare to touch him.

Towards the Thames the crow pauses for a moment, just to rest on the ivy-covered gable of Medmenham Abbey. In a lonely spot, close by the ferry house, the building stands, the tower and cloister being modern, and little remaining of the old Cistercian monastery that at the Reformation contained only two inmates. It was here that Francis

Dashwood, afterwards Lord Le Despenser, founded the infamous club of the Franciscans, of which Wilkes and Lord Sandwich were members. "The twelve monks of Medmenham" celebrated orgies which shocked even that coarse age. Sterne's eccentric and Shandean friend, John Hall Stevenson, of Crazy Castle, was said to be one of them. Over a door in the ivied gable still exists the free Franciscan motto, "Fay ce que voudras." A mystery hung over all the feasts of the Hell Fire Club. The workmen who furnished and adorned the abbey were kept locked up in the house, and were hurried back to London directly their work was finished. The club dinner was always passed in at the half-open door, and no servants were allowed to wait. Devil worship, said some; Bacchanalian orgies whispered others. Country people shuddered at night to see the abbey windows flaring till daybreak, and to hear the mad laughter of the revellers. The story went that the consciences of the monks were so tormented that they could only sleep at night in cradles, and part of Wilkes's cradle is still shown. There was, of course, no reason for the cradles, except to produce the hideous parody of childhood, that such vile old reprobates must have presented. A curious set of pictures at the "Thatched House Tavern," belonging to the Dilettanti Society, have preserved the portraits of some of the brothers, who, dressed as monks, are here represented in

ridiculing sacred rites. How these portraits (by Reynolds, &c.) have got mixed up with the Dilettanti Society, we do not understand, but so it is. No set of men were ever so wicked as these friends of Dashwood were supposed to be. Ribald, depraved, and sneering no doubt they were, and their feasts mark an epoch in the vices of a licentious age. Wilkes is said to have broken up the St. Franciscan Club by a mischievous trick. One night when the wine was circulating fast, and the loathsome mockery of religious ceremonies was at the highest, a huge ape hideously dressed, with horns and other satanic additions, was dropped down the chimney, the candles being at the same time extinguished by a pre-arranged plan. The ape springing upon the back of one of the sceptics, the coward, believing it to be the Prince of Evil himself, fell on his knees and began to shout and pray in agonies of terror. The club never rallied after that exposure of their superstition. Those who remember Hogarth's picture of Wilkes, with his terrible malign squint and rat-like teeth, can imagine how he looked when the ape appeared and scared the St. Franciscan Club.

There is a tradition, too, about Medmenham (no scandal about Queen Elizabeth) that an illegitimate son of that lion-hearted queen, who defied the Pope and thrashed the Spaniard, lies there interred, but we utterly disbelieve the story; nor do we think

that Elizabeth ever regarded the Earl of Leicester, the father of the imaginary infant, with any other feelings than those of honest friendship. He was her general and her statesman—above all, he was a man of presence; but it is quite certain that Elizabeth's friendship to Leicester never ripened into love.

Swift away on our black wing after this short resting to where the blue smoke rises over Reading like the smoke of a witch's caldron. Let us perch first on the abbey gateway. This abbey, founded by Henry the First, and endowed with the privilege of coining, attained a great name among the English abbeys, from the "incorrupt hand" of St. James the Apostle, presented to it by Henry the First. After working thousands of miracles, raising cripples, curing blindness—after millions of pilgrimages had been made to it, and it had been long incensed and in every way glorified—the hand was lost at the Dissolution. No one cared about it then; it was mere saintly lumber. In the general scramble of that subversive time some worshipper who still venerated it hid it under ground, where it was found centuries after. It is now preserved at Danesfield, a Roman Catholic family still honouring the uncertain relic. It will for ever remain a moot point whether the hand at Danesfield, however, is the hand of St. James, or a mere chance mummy hand, such as mediæval thieves were wont to use as candlesticks

and talismans; "hands of glory," the rascals called them. This hand of St. James made the fortune of the abbey at Reading, and was an open, receptive hand, no doubt, for all current coin of those days from the groat to the broad piece. Bells rung, incense fumed, priests bore the cross, and acolytes swung the thurible in the abbey at Reading, and all encouraged by the *éclat* of the incorruptible hand.

Henry always delighted in Reading abbey. He held a Parliament here; and here, in 1135, he received Heraclius, the patriarch of Jerusalem, who, safe out of reach of Saracen arrow and sabre, presenting the king with the somewhat nominal gifts of the keys of the Holy Sepulchre, and the royal banners of the sacred city, urged Henry to fresh forays on the Infidel. The king was true to Reading till his death; for when the stewed lampreys of Rouen hurried him from the world, his heart, tongue, brains and bowels were buried in France, but the rest of his royal remains he had forwarded to Reading, where his first queen, "the good Queen Maude," lay already, and his second wife, Adeliza, afterwards joined him. The abbey became quite a royal cemetery after this sanction, and the eldest son of Henry the Second was also buried here. At the Dissolution, when Royal tombs were destroyed and the bones "thrown out," the kingly relics were beaten about by the sextons' spades, and tossed anywhere. The poorest

rubbish heap of Reading had some of them to feed its nettles. At the same Dissolution, Hugh Faringdon, the abbot, was so contumacious and stubborn, and so chafed the royal tyrant by his prate about popes, and councils, and decretals, that King Hal, flying out at last, had him hung, drawn, and quartered, and then turned the abbey into a palace, which was destroyed at the great rebellion, the ruins remaining as a stone quarry for a time.

On the last Reading abbot but one, King Henry the Seventh played a malicious trick, which showed much of his son's rapacity and jovial humour. One day the monarch, hunting near Windsor, lost his way, and, riding on to Reading, passed himself off to the unsuspicious abbot as one of the King's yeomen of the guard. A noble sirloin of beef was placed before him, and on this he plied so well his knife and fork, that the abbot, delighted, watched him with placid admiration.

"Well fare thy heart," he said; "here in a cup of sack I do remember the health of his grace your master; verily I would give a hundred pounds on condition that I could feed so lustily on beef as you do. Alas! my weak and queezie stomach could hardly digest the wing of a small rabbit or chicken." The king quickly pledged the abbot, and left him undiscovered. Soon after armed men beat at the abbey gate, and the queezie prelate was hurried to the

Tower, and there kept some weeks a close prisoner, nurtured on bread and water; his body empty of food, Fuller says, his mind full of fears. The abbot could not, resolve how he may, imagine how he had incurred the king's displeasure. At last, the fast having been long enough preserved, a sirloin of beef was one day set before the delighted man, and he soon verified the proverb that two hungry meals make a glutton. Suddenly in sprang King Hal out of a lobby where he had been in ambuscade. "My lord," quoth the king, "deposit presently your hundred pounds in gold, or else no going hence all the days of your life. I have been your physician to cure you of your queezie stomach, and now I want the fee which I have deserved." The abbot threw down the money at once, and returned to Reading lighter in purse, but merrier in heart.

John of Gaunt and Edward the Fourth were both married at Reading Abbey. The town, so long celebrated for its cloth trade, was besieged by Essex and the Parliamentarians in 1643, and the entrenchments are still visible in the valley. Ten days the townspeople, encouraged by Sir A. Ashton, bore the cannonade and then surrendered. But the greatest alarm in the town was in 1688, when the Reading men got into their heads a notion that the disbanded Irish soldiers of King James, then in the place, were going to massacre the inhabitants during divine ser-

vice. The irresistible panic received the name of "The Irish Cry." After all only one townsman was killed, and he was felled in a skirmish in the market place on that Sunday morning that James's dragoons fled.

Archbishop Laud was the son of a Reading clothier, and the charities he founded still exist. John Bunyan, that great "seer," used, in the days of his persecutions, after his twelve years and a half in dismal Bedford jail, to sometimes pass through Reading, where he was known, on his way to visit secret Baptist congregations, disguised as a carter, and carrying a whip over his shoulder, to avoid detection from prying constables. He is said also to have here caught the fever of which he died.

Perched on the tall flint tower of St. Lawrence (a church once memorable for a silver gridiron containing a portion of the saint), we remember that here Queen Elizabeth would attend service, looking sharply after the preacher's doctrine, from the canopied pew of the Knollys family. What a scarecrow to a blushing curate that stiff old lady in the ruff and jewelled stomacher must have been, glowering at him from under the bushy pyramid of her auburn hair. John Blagrave, the mathematician, whose cloaked and ruffed effigy in this church still grasps the typical globe and quadrant, left a strange legacy for the encouragement of Reading maidservants. The

churchwardens of three parishes were every year to choose so many maidservants of five years' standing, who were to meet and throw dice for a purse of ten pounds on Good Friday. "Lucky money!" says Ashmole, "for I never yet heard of a maid who got the ten pounds but soon after ound a good husband."

Now quick the crow flies from Reading past the old bridge that leads to Caversham. On an island below this bridge, two of Henry the Second's knights fought a duel; when one of them, Henry de Essex, being struck through his mail, swooned at the water's edge, and was borne by the monks into Reading Abbey. The black wings bear the crow to Newbury, where the fame of Jack of Newbury invites him to a moment's rest on a roof of that quiet, solid-looking town by the swift Kennet. Immortal Jack was a poor clothier, who, by prudence and industry, contrived at last to set a hundred looms at work. When the Scotch invaded England, in Henry the Eighth's reign, Jack's quota was simply four pikemen and two horsemen; but his generous heart disdained such a poor levy, so he marched at once northward, followed by fifty tall horsemen and fifty footmen, well armed, and better clothed than any in the posse. If he ever reached Flodden, Jack no doubt did good service there against the Scottish spears. When the king returned to England, he went

to see the brave clothier, and was splendidly feasted by Jack, who, however, sensibly refused the invidious honour of knighthood. This worthy man's best work, however, was carrying to a conclusion a commercial treaty with France and the Low Countries, which Wolsey for a long time thwarted, suspecting Jack of Lutheran principles. Jack was bold, and said, "If my Lord Chancellor's father had been no faster in killing calves than his son is in despatching of poor men's suits, I think he would never have worn a mitre." But the king eventually took his part, and carried the matter through. Jack is still and will be ever the hero of Newbury, an incitement to poor men's sons for century after century, a ceaseless harvest of good and blessing to the Berkshire town that bred him.

The early reformers were much persecuted at Newbury, and three martyrs were burnt in the sand pits, a quarter of a mile from Newbury. When they came near the spot they fell to the ground. Palmer, one of them, a fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, repeated the thirty-first Psalm, and then all rose and kissed the stake. As Palmer warned the Newbury people of Popish practices, a brutal bailiff's servant flung a fagot, and struck him in the face. The sheriff however broke the brute's head for it, calling the man a cruel tormentor. When the quick flames began to dart upwards, the three good men held up

their hands to Heaven, and crying, "Lord Jesus strengthen us!" died peaceably.

In the Civil war Newbury was the scene of two hot battles. In the first, in 1643, the cavalier officers fought in their shirts, not waiting to put on their doubtlets before they took horse. Essex's men wore branches of fern and thorn in their hats. The London trained bands held firm at Newbury Marsh, though Prince Rupert charged them madly with the war-cry, "Queen Mary in the field!" and six thousand men were left upon the red trampled ground. Eventually, after six hours fighting, Essex retired to Reading, Prince Rupert cutting his rear guard to pieces as it got entangled in "Dead Man's Lane," near Theale. That same night sixty cartloads of slain were brought into Newbury, including the blameless Falkland, the cavalier "sans peur et sans reproche," who had predicted his own death. A poplar still marks the spot where he fell. The young Earl of Carnarvon, who led the cavalry, was brought back to Newbury thrown across a horse "like a dead calf."

The second battle was in 1644, when Charles was on his way to relieve Donnington Castle. Manchester's army first attacked Shaw House, while Waller, crossing the Lambourn, seized Speen, a suburban village, and fell on the king's horse. The Puritans advanced on Shaw House singing psalms, but Colonel Lisle, unarmed and only in his Holland shirt, chased

them off bravely, shouting, "For the Crown!" "For Prince Charles!" "For the Duke of York!" while the bullets stormed on the angry fanatics from the windows and parapets of the manor-house. Cloud after cloud of London pikemen gave way before the cavalier's charge. From that stately old red brick Elizabethan house the crow still sees, surrounded by its old-fashioned gardens, the cavaliers shouting approval of brave Colonel Lisle and his deeds. At nightfall the king's men drew off to Donnington, and from thence to Oxford by a fine moonlight, leaving the church where Jack of Newbury lies buried, and the market house which contains his son's portrait.

One waft of the wing brings the crow to Donnington, that fine old ruin, supposed to be the castle given to Chaucer by John of Gaunt. It did really belong to the poet's granddaughter Alice, and the great oaks in the park were probably planted by Thomas Chaucer, the poet's son. This castle was once held so bravely for the king by Colonel Boys, who, being told that three of the towers were down, and that the Puritans would give no quarter, nor leave one stone upon another, exclaimed, like a brave cavalier as he was:

"I am not bound to repair the castle, but, by God's help, I will keep the ground for the king."

Now fast on towards Wiltshire and the broad downs, where the wind blows free as over the ocean.

CHAPTER V.

MARLBOROUGH TO GLASTONBURY.

THE crow now has a fair flight westward over the great Wiltshire plains, where the long chalk waves of the old sea bed are covered with crisp short grass, which the wild thyme purples, and the drifts of thistle-down whiten, where, beside the graves of Danish kings, the wheat-ear flits from ant-hill to ant-hill, and the quick rabbit scuds from thorn bush to thorn bush. It is a lonely wind-swept region, whose sentinels are the shepherds wrapped in their soldiers' grey great-coats, watching moodily beside their flocks. Roman roads chequer Wiltshire, British graves dot its surface, Druid circles stud its desolate tracks. Old dykes, too, traverse it in shadowy lines, and mark the spots where Alfred smote the Saxon, or where he fell back sullenly towards the Somersetshire marshes, ready to pounce again upon the revelling robbers' camps. Sarsen stones and Grey wethers point the way to the great temple of

Stonehenge, and the huge clusters of Druid altars at Avebury. Yonder, too, the crow sees here and there the wool-gatherers, those witch-like old women who creep along the valleys of the Downs, wrenching from the surly thorn bushes the tufts of wool they have snatched as toll from the sheltering sheep. These hags are the Banshees of Wiltshire, the Sibyls of the Downs. They come like shadows, so depart.

It has been proposed by some wild medical enthusiast to compel the poorer inhabitants of our great towns to come to these Wiltshire downs at certain ill seasons to oxygenise their pale attenuated blood, and quicken their circulation. The wind here, with a free rush of thirty or forty miles, unimpeded by anything more resisting than a clump of firs or a rifle butt, flies laden with oxygen and life. As Mr. Ruskin says of the wind on the Yorkshire wolds, you can lean up against it; a Wiltshire gale blows loud enough on its stormy bugles to waken the legionaries of Vespasian, who sleep beside old Sarum camp, or the British warrior who rests beside his dog and spear within a stone's throw of Stonehenge. It is surely the most vitalising wind that breaks over England; and if it was not for the hard Wiltshire beer and the still harder cheese, one hardly knows how any Wiltshire men could contrive to die short of a hundred years old. Free down the land here has always been, ever since that great British chief, old

King Cole—free to the shifting flocks of starlings, free to the rabbit and the fox, free to the hare and the greyhound, free to the shepherd and the wool-gatherer. The old battle-fields are quiet enough now—quietest of all on summer Sundays, when the village bells cast their music from valley to valley; calm, too, at sunset, when Druid altars grow once more crimson, and the golden bars of the western sky rise like steps to the gate of Heaven, or the last fading rounds of that sunbeam ladder on which the patriarch saw the angels ascending and descending. It was here round the Wansdyke that in old time very hard blows were struck by Dane and Saxon, Celt and Roman. Thousands of Romans, with skulls beaten in by British axes and bronze swords, lie peacefully under the thin turf of the Wiltshire Downs; here, too, the white horse standard was forced back by Arthur's warriors till the crowning victory at Badbury. Those British villages, now mere rings of stone, mere dimples in the turf, were torn down by the rough hands of men who had helped to destroy Jerusalem with Titus. Those Druid circles have been trodden by the white-robed priests, who urged on the scythed chariots against the Romans. The thrush pipes sweetly now from the wood, where once yelling painted warriors rushed on the spears of Vespasian and the moles engineers where once the legionaries dug their

trenches to shelter themselves from the British slingers.

The crow, being a long-lived bird, and having a memory, recalls, as he flies from grassy camp to camp, from Druid circle to the clusters of grey stone houses, nestling round churches in blue folds of the Downs, many traditions of the Plain—of the white horses cut on its slopes, of its perils in former days, when Death so often met the traveller in this great ocean of wild waste. On a dark calm October night in 1816, the Exeter mail, after traversing many miles of the plain, unimpeded by Roman, Saxon, or British ghost, and having, to the great delight of antiquarian passengers, bowled past innumerable burial mounds, monoliths, and half obliterated encampments of various invaders of England, rattled at last in the dark up to Winterslow Hut, where the guard sounded his bugle, and the coachman stopped. There was but a dim light, and the driver had hardly well pulled up his four well-fed smoking horses, when a dark shape suddenly leaped with a roar upon one of the leaders. No one knew what monster it could be. It seemed a horrible nightmare. The "outsides" leaped down panic-struck. Did wild beasts still haunt the Downs, and had one of them been lurking in readiness for its prey? Two "insides," in Spanish cloaks and Hessian boots, awakened out of their sleep by a monster's roars of rage and fury, and the horses'

screams and neighs of angry terror, leaped out of the coach, dashed into the inn, and barricaded themselves in an upper room to bide the result, or at all events to keep death at bay as long as possible. A large mastiff belonging to the inn, eager for battle, and careless what the monster might be, at once leaped to the rescue, but was instantly killed. When lights came it proved to be a lioness that had escaped from a caravan on its way to Salisbury fair. It had left the leader, which, striking out like a boxer with its fore hoofs, had pursued its retreating assailant and beaten it to the ground. Presently the keeper arrived, and accustomed to tame such beasts, soon forced the lioness by blows and threats into an outhouse, where it was secured. The gentlemen in Hessian boots were rallied, consoled with brandy and water, and the coach drove off. That was something like an adventure, and no doubt the two Hessian-booted gentlemen, whenever they told the story, boasted of what they would have done had they only been provided with firearms.

Floating over Lady Down, that grassy terrace that rises above Wardour, the Castle which Lady Blanche Arundel once held so bravely for King Charles, the crow notes that the spot is remarkable for the apparition of a headless lady, who centuries ago was slain there by her injured husband, who overtook her as she was flying from him with her lover. But it

is while skirting the Downs towards Marlborough that a Wiltshire tradition of the highwaymen times compels the crow to alight on the stone that records the fact. One dark night, at the beginning of this century, when pistols were as regular travelling furniture, as a cigar-case is now, a certain Wiltshire gentleman, riding over the Downs beyond Hungerford, was attacked by two thieves on foot—a short grim man and a tall savage rascal. His pistols missed fire, but our traveller having a stout heart and a strong arm, drove back the fellows with the heavy butt end of his riding whip, and eventually, after a tough fight, beat off and beat down the shorter of his two enemies. After a further hot tussle the taller man at last threw up the game and also fled. The traveller, resolute on retaliation, pursued him fast; but the man was swift-footed, fear gave him wings, and though the moon had just risen, he contrived to dodge about a Roman encampment, behind bushes and ruined old earthworks, so as to evade for a long time the keen and unrelenting pursuer. Hour after hour the pursuit and the flight continued, till just towards daybreak the traveller caught the tired rogue in the open and pushed him to full speed. One more lash of the horse and he gained on him. Nearer and nearer—till at last in a valley of the Downs he ran in on him. Leaping off his horse he threw the rascal to the ground—grasped his throat, and bade him sur-

render; but the man made no resistance, no curse broke from him, no cry for mercy. He was dead! His heart had broken. Like a hunted hare, he had died before the hound's teeth could meet in him.

From Inkpen Beacon, just south of Hungerford, the highest chalk hill of England, the crow looks down from his airy height on the spot where, in 1856, the last bustard was caught. This clumsy bird, the ostrich of Europe, was once common on the Wiltshire Downs, where it could stride and stalk freely, as it used to do at Chalons, before the drum drove it away. It was sometimes run down with greyhounds, but its flesh hardly repaid this singular chase. In 1805, one of these strong birds, four feet high, and very powerful in the claws and beak, attacked a horseman near Heytesbury, treating the genus homo as an intruder on its wild domain. The bustard is now very probably extinct.

A few beats of the black wings brings the crow from Hungerford to Littlecot, that mansion of the Pophams, whose mullioned windows overlook the valley of the Kennet. The hall is hung with "pikes, and guns, and bows," buff jerkins and steel caps of Cromwell's Ironsides; while Judge Popham's portrait glowers beside that of pretty Nell Gwynne. This house is the scene of the old legend of Wild Darell, which Scott tells in the notes to Rokeby. One night in the reign of Elizabeth, a midwife was sent for out of

Berkshire. The pay was to be good, the groom said, but the woman must be blindfolded, and must ask no questions and tell no tales. She consented, and mounted behind the man, who took her a long rough circuitous ride over the Downs, till she lost all sense of direction and distance. At last she arrived at a house, was shown up a grand staircase, and performed her duties. When they were ended the tapestry lifted, and a ferocious man entered, who, seizing the new-born child, dashed it under the grate and destroyed it, as ruthlessly as if it had been a wolf's cub.

The woman returned unhappy, and brooded over the murder. She bore the agonies of remorse for some time, but at last was driven to tell the secret and free her conscience. Disdainful of her promise, and forgetful of the bribe, she went and confessed the matter to a magistrate. Had she any clue? Yes, she had counted the number of stairs up which she had been taken, and she had secretly, unobserved by any one, torn off a piece of the bed-curtain. Inquiries were made, suspicion fell on Wild Darell, of Littlecot, and stern men came searching the old house. Darell was seized, but the judge was bribed, and, the proof being insufficient, the murderer escaped the sword of justice. Heaven he could not escape, however, for soon afterwards he fell, while hunting, in leaping a stone stile, still called "Darell's death place," and broke his neck. The Pophams, it

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is said, then accquired the house by some unjust confiscation; but a curse fell on the place, and no eldest son has ever lived to inherit the property. This may be true or not: certain it is the grate and the curtain are still shown, the stile remains, and the stairs can be counted. What does any one want more? On stormy nights Darell is no doubt heard by those who determine to hear him, and a child's faint cry mingles with his curses. Poor Popham! he at least is cruelly maligned in having his name linked to the infamy of Wild Darell, for he was really a worthy Somersetshire man, and a chief justice of the King's Bench, whose laborious reports and cases, resolutions and judgments, are still extant in law libraries.

Over the Downs outside Marlborough the crow skims for a moment to Barbury camp, and alights with a sidelong waft to pick up a stray tradition, for it was in this great double ring of ditch and rampart, with a fifty foot fall and an area of two thousand feet, that the Britons held out for a whole day against Cynric and the Saxons. At sunset, the Saxons, however, with a last tremendous rush, stormed the camp, and, crashing in with their axes, conquered the last British stronghold in Wiltshire.

One lift of the wings drifts the crow into Marlborough, that quiet scholastic town, so far from the din of the railway's innumerable wheels, and so snugly sheltered by the great bluffs of chalk that gird it

round. That handsome red brick building, now the College, on a disused chimney-pot of which the crow rests, folding his wings for a moment, has quite a history of its own. The central part of it is a fragment of the "Great House" built by Sir Francis Seymour, a grandson of Protector Somerset, who was created Baron Seymour by misguided Charles the First, during the Rebellion; for Marlborough was a royal town, and had its rubs in those times. In 1643, Sir Nevile Poole seized the great house, and held it with his sturdy but gloomy men in buff, for the Parliament. The year before roystering Wilmot had, with his cavaliers, stormed and burnt the town, and sent John Franklin, the popular member, and several of the leading townsmen, prisoners to Oxford. In 1643, Rupert broke the ranks of Essex on Aldbourne Chace; and, in 1644, Charles himself came and held his quarters at Marlborough Castle. Then all the Vandyck men, with peaked beards and lace collars falling over their steel breastplates, passed away in a puff of cannon smoke, and a lull followed. In Queen Anne's time the Earl and Countess of Hertford kept house here, and entertained many of the great writers. Pope, bitter and invalided, came there and wrote stinging verses; and Thomson of the Seasons was staying here while he wrote his Spring—the other sections of his great composite poems being written at Richmond and in London. He is described as a

short, fat, lazy man, careless, generous, and good-natured, a shy epicurean bachelor, who could not read even his own verses tolerably. He was a kind, improvident, unenvious student, always in pecuniary troubles, and all his life supported by patrons. Quin, the actor, once helped him out of a sponging-house; and once safe from behind the grated door, Thomson was soon busy again at his verses, his odes, his elegies, his Rule Britannias, and his dismally pompous tragedies. The two best stories told of his indolence are these, and they sufficiently show in what

"A pleasant land of drowsy head"

and dreamhead the Scotch poet passed his lazy life. He was once seen standing before a wall peach-tree, with both his hands in his pockets, munching a melting peach with great unction. At another time a friend found him in bed very late in the afternoon. The energetic man expostulating, reproached the slug-gard, and asked him why the deel he didna get up.

"Troth, mon," said the epicurean, "I see nae *motive* for rising."

We can fancy the oily poet, weary of the Countess's state, mooning about the great Wiltshire house, thinking of the old castle whose site it occupies, and which had been founded by a bishop, seized upon by Stephen and John, and inhabited by Henry the Third, who held his court and parliament there.

A tradition of the old posting days still lingers in

Marlborough. In 1767, the year before the great Earl of Chatham, stricken down by age and infirmities, resigned his place in the cabinet, that great orator, seized with gout on the road to London, was compelled to halt at the Castle Inn at Marlborough. Wilkes tells us of his eagle eye, of the fascination of his glance, of the fire unquenchable in his glowing words. The haughty and imperious old statesman remained shut up in his room here for many weeks, and we picture to ourselves the proud old man with the attributes Wilkes describes terribly testy at the delay, and chafing at the vexatious disease, and the fuss of over-servile landlords and over-zealous country Ollapods. Although so proud that he never transacted business but in grand official costume, it was not the first time the earl had given audiences in bed. During this visit, which must have set Marlborough talking, everybody who travelled on the great west road was astonished to find the town overflowing with footmen and grooms in the earl's livery. What a retinue! it was fit for a king. The fact was, it was simply a caprice of the old proud earl, who had insisted that during his stay every waiter, stable boy, and odd man at the Castle Inn, should wear his livery. The earl eventually died, £20,000 or so in debt; but the nation paid it, proud of a patriotic high-born statesman, who had died almost in the act of denouncing those who would tamely surrender

America and "dismember an ancient and noble monarchy."

The crow strikes now in full flight outside Marlborough, across the Downs to the great Druidic temple of Avebury, the Devil's Den, and the mysterious artificial hill of Silbury. Avebury is the centre of all Druidic tradition, and is older than even "that draughtiest building in the world"—Stonehenge. At Avebury there are twenty-eight acres covered by Celtic graves and huge Druidic stones. From the adjacent hill you see them strewing the ground everywhere like flocks of sheep, and in the distance down the last ridge of the Downs, towards Bowood and Severnake Forest, you can track all the waving line of the Wandsdyke, the old rampart frontier of the Belgæ. In 1740 two avenues of two miles in length led to the central circle at Avebury of one hundred unhewn stones, enclosing two more double concentric circles. These rings were then supposed to be emblems of the serpent, which was a symbol of the sun. In one circle of twelve stones there stood a single block twenty feet high, and in the outer by thirty a triangular group of three. Six hundred of these stones have since been destroyed, built up in walls, hedges or cottages, and only about a dozen now remain in their old places. The old church of Avebury stands near these relics of a forgotten superstition, and triumphs over their decay.

Theorists in Indian Celtic mythology have gone stark-staring mad about these stone circles, older than Stonehenge. "A temple of the sun, obvious to the meanest capacity," cries one. "Temple of the sun be hanged, learned idiot," writes another; "a Druid cathedral, a patriarchal temple built ages before the rude stone-rings of Cornwall, the hallowed altars of Dartmoor, or the processional avenues of Brittany." "Incompetent blockhead," screams a third. "Why, Silbury Hill was the Druid's Ararat, and these stones are clearly emblems of Noah's Ark and the patriarchal altars." But the strongest-winged hippogriff of a hobby-horse that ever trod Cloudland is ridden by Mr. Duke, who contends that Wiltshire was treated by the Druids as the ground plan of a vast planetarium, or astronomical map; these same Druids, who worshipped the god of thunder and adored the oak and the mistletoe, laying out the whole range of downs into planetary regions, in which the sun and planets were represented on a meridional line from north to south—a position from which the ancients believed the planets had started at the beginning, and would return at the end of the world, when they had run their course. The earth itself, says Mr. Duke, that mere speck of phosphorescent clay, was represented by Silbury Hill; the sun and moon by the great circles of Avebury, Avebury being a Phœnician word for "the mighty ones." The

ecliptic by the avenues, or the Serpent; Venus by a stone circle, at Winterbourne Bassett; Mercury by Walker's Hill; Mars by an earth-work at Marden, in the vale of Pewsey; Jupiter by Casterley Camp, on the edge of Salisbury Plain; and Saturn by the great blocks at Stonehenge. The Druids brought Eastern learning to Europe, and were great astronomers, Mr. Duke says, and they represented numerical and astronomical cycles by these Avebury stones. He will have it that these numerical cycles were compounds of the mystic number four, sacred as an emblem of the four letters by which the name of the Supreme Being was expressed in the early languages. The one hundred stones of the outer ring were four, twenty-five times repeated, and the four hundred of the avenue one hundred, four times repeated, whilst the thirty of the outer ring of each double circle represented the lunar cycle, or days of the month, and the twelve of the inner the months of the year. In this way, according to Mr. Duke, Wiltshire became a great fossil almanack, and the priests, perambulating the county before Moore and Zadkiel had conferred their boons on the world, could then know and reckon the proper days for observing religious festivals.

After all these puzzle-brain theories, the result is, however, no great enlargement of knowledge. They just leave us with a confused notion that the circles might have had some obscure astronomical meaning,

and that is all. It is even now uncertain whether Silbury Hill was cut into its present geometrical form, or was built up by manual labour. It is nearly as high as St. Michael's Mount, it covers more than five acres of land, and it has been calculated that even in these days navigators could not build it up for less than twenty thousand pounds. It was long thought to be the burial mound of the founder of Avebury; but it has been twice opened—first in 1777, and lastly in 1849, and no trace of any interment could be found. Many think its name implies that it was sacred to the god Sul or Sol, as St. Anne's Hill was to Tanaris, the god of thunder. There is no tradition about Avebury; but the story at Stonehenge is that no one can count the stones twice alike. When Charles the Second, however, was waiting there for the friends who were to conduct him to the coast of Sussex, where a vessel was lying off for him, he counted the stones to beguile the time, and refuted the vulgar error to his own satisfaction.

The old legend of Stonehenge was that the stones were brought from Africa to Ireland by giants, and that Merlin, by means of potent incantations, floated them across the sea to please King Ambrosius, the last British king, who wished to commemorate the massacre on Salisbury Plain, of Vortigern and three hundred of his nobles by Hengist the Saxon. In the Middle Ages Stonehenge was called "The Giant's

Dance." At Stanton Drew, a Druidical ruin near Bristol, the legends of these stone-rings grow more grotesque. A giant is said to have thrown one of the stones from a neighbouring hill, and the chief circle there is supposed to consist of the petrified bodies of a wicked wedding party, who would dance on Sunday, and to whom the Devil presented himself as piper, leading them a pretty dance, and ending by leaving them turned into pillars of stone.

Glancing on through Wiltshire, the crow turns for a moment through the thin blue air to rest on the highest weathercock of Devizes, an old town, so called, as tradition says, from its being formerly divided between the king and the bishop. There is a curious inscription on the market cross, which records a terrible warning to all dishonest traders. In 1753 a woman, named Ruth Pierce, came with two neighbours from the Vale of Pewsey, to buy, with their combined money, a sack of wheat. The two gossips paid, but Ruth did not lay down her money, though she asserted she did. They loudly accused her, and she then wished she might drop down dead if she had not paid. She had scarcely uttered the words before she fell down and expired, and in one of her clenched hands the missing money was found.

It was the Bear Inn at Devizes that the father of Sir Thomas Lawrence formerly kept, and here the handsome boy learnt to draw likenesses and recite

poetry. The father was a restless, desultory sort of man, who had been solicitor, poet, artist, exciseman, "everything by turns, and nothing long." His life was a web of unfinished schemes and incomplete studies. Proud of his son, he used to appear in powdered periwig and clean ruffles, to ask his guests whether Tom should recite to them from the poets, or draw their likenesses. Garrick used always to stop at the Bear to hear the speeches Tom had learned since the last time; Prince Hoare, Sheridan, Wilkes, and Lord Kenyon, all praised and patronized the pretty boy who painted his first portrait at six. Lord Kenyon used to describe the door bursting open, and the beautiful child dashing in, riding on a stick. He was asked if he could take the gentleman's likeness. "That I can," said the boy, "and very like too." The restless father eventually threw up the posting-house, and settled at Bath, where Tom soon became renowned for his crayon likenesses and his engraved portrait of Mrs. Siddons.

From the top of Roundaway Hill we look down on the scene of that defeat of Sir William Waller by Lord Wilmot, in 1643, of which Clarendon has left us a fine sketch. After the battle of Lansdown, the Royalists, under the Marquis of Hertford and Prince Maurice, fell back on Devizes, followed by Waller, who surrounded the town and erected batteries. The town was open then, without the least defence but

small hedges and ditches, in which cannon were placed. The avenues were barricaded to stop the Puritan cavalry. The Earl of Crawford, trying to send powder into the town, was driven off with the loss of his cannon. Devizes was in imminent danger. The musqueteers had only one hundred and fifty pounds weight of match left, but they collected all the bed cords and beat them and boiled them in saltpetre, and they then took heart, Lord Wilmot being at hand. He presently arrived with fifteen hundred horse and two small field-pieces, which he discharged, to give notice to the town of his arrival.

In the meanwhile, Waller, over-confident, refused terms to the cavaliers, and wrote to the Parliament to say that by the next post he would announce the number and quality of the prisoners. He drew up his men in battalion on Roundaway Hill, with all Wiltshire and Gloucestershire spreading in a blue mist before him. Wishing to prevent the town from joining the King, at last, "out of pure gayety," he left his advantage, his firm reserve, his well flanked cannon, and his fortress hill, and bore down on Wilmot. Haslerig's cuirassiers made the first charge upon Sir John Byron's regiment, but they were worsted by the keener cavaliers, and driven back on the reserve cavalry. Then Wilmot broke the other divisions one by one, and hurled them back, a rabble of wounded men and frightened horses, towards the

Cornish foot that now burst from the town and attacked Waller's pikemen and musketeers, turning their own cannon upon them. The flight was terrible over the hills, and the pursuit arduous; many rolled down into the valley and perished. Oliver's Castle and the Wansdyke saw many a death grapple. The rout was complete. The Cornishmen were relentless. The Puritans lost nearly two thousand men, slain or prisoners, and Waller fled to Bristol, leaving his train guns, ammunition, and baggage. That defeat was the cause of great heart-burnings between Waller and Essex. Waller, thinking himself betrayed and deserted by Essex, who had let Wilmot march unimpeded from Oxford; to Essex, reproaching the poet with unsoldierly neglect and want of courage in letting himself be beaten by a mere handful of men without cannon—men, too, against whom he never led a single charge in person. Waller, who had made himself ridiculous by overconfidence, and by announcing the defeat of the cavaliers, and issuing circulars to Wiltshire justices and constables to apprehend Royalist fugitives, after this fell hopelessly in public esteem.

A long flight now, and the crow, clearing the aërial frontier, is in pleasant Somersetshire. Passing high over grand old carved church towers and snug homesteads, the crow furls his wings at the foot of the Mendip Hills, and descends on the Cathe-

dral towers of Wells, that grave old town, consecrated to religion ever since the time of the Saxons. In the hall of the bishop's palace Whiting, the last abbot of Glastonbury was tried for refusing to surrender his abbey to Henry the Eighth. It was a mock trial, worthy of the tyrant, for the abbot, accused of appropriating the church plate, although acquitted, was seized on his return to Glastonbury, dragged to the top of the Tor, and there put to death. This is the same proud abbot who is said to have defied the king, who had threatened to burn his kitchen, by building that strange edifice which is still to be seen at Glastonbury, square without, octagonal within, and with a pyramidical roof supporting a pierced lantern to let out the heat and vapour. "I will build such a kitchen," said the abbot, "that all the wood in the royal forest will not suffice to burn it;" but modern antiquaries unfortunately prove the building to be far older than Whiting.

A short flight to Glastonbury brings the crow to congenial ruins, shattered pillars, and ruined arches. Yonder is Wearyall Hill, where the monkish legends say Joseph of Arimathea rested after his long pilgrimage from the Holy Land, and planting his thorn staff in the ground, decided there to abide, the green meadows, the swelling hills, and the pleasant orchards of Somersetshire soothing his wearied spirit. In the abbey gardens a graft from the saint's staff still

grows, and flowers at Christmas—best proof of its miraculous origin.

It was at Glastonbury that, in Henry the Second's time, they found the supposed grave of King Arthur, that great paladin of British romance re-immortalised by Mr. Tennyson. Here in Avalon, girt by marshes, they found the hero in a rude oak coffin, sleeping beside his guilty but repentant queen, whose yellow hair crumbled to dust when a monk snatched at it with greedy hands. The sacred bones were deposited in a magnificent shrine before the high altar.

Glastonbury was a great place for saints. St. Patrick and St. Benedict were abbots at Avalon, and also that very doubtful saint—Dunstan. It was in some crypt here that to the latter, working as a smith, constructing cross and chalice for holy uses, the Devil appeared one day at his half door in the shape of a beautiful woman. The saint waited till he had got his tongs red hot, then made a rush and caught the tempter by the nose. No wonder, therefore, that when Edwy expelled the insubordinate prelate, the Devil, remembering the tongs and the unlucky visit to the forge, shook the abbey with rejoicing laughter.

Now the crow rises for a further flight, and turning his head westwards, strikes out across broad green pastures for Sedgemoor and the distant borders of sunny Devonshire.

CHAPTER VI.

BRIDGEWATER TO TAUNTON.

FAST from the airy Mendips, mere faint blue waves in the horizon, the crow cleaves the silent air, to fold its wings upon the glittering weathercock of St. Mary's spire at Bridgewater. Yonder spread stubble fallows and orchards, over what was once the vast swamp, subject to inundations, where Alfred hid himself from the Danes. Two miles away yonder to the south-east lies fatal Sedgmoor, where the Duke of Monmouth was defeated; and the fields there are still named after traditions of those unhappy days.

The misguided duke landed at Lyme in June, 1685. Devonshire, Dorsetshire, and Somersetshire, were soon in a flame. The day after landing he was proclaimed King. Monmouth entered Bridgewater, and was welcomed by the ruling mayor and alderman, who led him in procession to the High Cross. He

took up his residence at the castle that, during the Civil War, Wyndham had defended and Fairfax shattered; and in the Castle Field his six thousand followers were encamped. His foot had few pikes and muskets, and many of them carried scythes. The cavalry were mounted on rough hairy colts, just taken from the marshes, and quite untamed.

After many purposeless marches and countermarches, Faversham at last came down upon him with two thousand five hundred regulars, and fifteen hundred Wiltshire militia—strong, stubborn shepherds from the plains, and tough farmers from the borders of Dorsetshire, who encamped at Middlezoy, and on the moor beyond Devizes. Poor irresolute Monmouth, who had only recently abandoned the notion of flight, now resolved on a night attack. His Puritan preachers harangued the troops. Ferguson, a fanatic rascal, who was Monmouth's adviser, took for the text the ominous words:

"The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods, he knoweth, and Israel he shall know. If it be in rebellion, or in transgression, against the Lord, save us not this day."

The moon was full, the northern streamers were dancing, a thick marsh fog was creeping up from the banks of the Parrett. As Monmouth and his forty bodyguard rode out of the castle the clock struck eleven. He looked desponding, people thought. His

army marched up what is now called the War-lane, towards the dykes of Sedgemoor, where Faversham's men were revelling. Monmouth led the foot, and Grey the horse. No drum was to be sounded, and no shot fired. The word for the night was "Soho." At Soho-square a grand house on the south side belonged to the duke. About one in the morning the rebels reached the boggy moors. Three broad ditches, filled with water, still lay between them and the enemy. The ammunition waggons remained behind. The pike and scythemen passed the Black Ditch by a muddy causeway. The second causeway, that over Langmoor Rhine, the guide missed in the fog, and the third, over Bussex Rhine, he never mentioned. The new recruits, rough ploughmen and fishermen, became confused. Some of King James's Horse Guards seeing them advancing, fired their carbines, and rode back to rouse the troopers at Weston Zoyland. Dunbarton's regiments beat to arms. Monmouth moved forward fast, but suddenly found himself stopped by the yawning darkness of Bussex Rhine.

"For whom are you?" cried a voice across the trench.

"For the king."

"What king?"

"King Monmouth!" shouted the insurgents, shouting their war cry, "God with us!"

The reply was a blazing volley, that sent the wild marsh horses to the rightabouts; they never rallied again. Just then the royal infantry came running up, and fired across the trench, steadily, but too high. The Life Guards and Blues soon scattered the fugitive cavalry, and the waggoners fled with the powder waggons. There was Monmouth, left without cavalry or ammunition, shut in between the trenches of Sedgemoor. He showed good blood now; snatching a pike, he rallied his men, and led them, as day broke, over the causeway. But Faversham, having reluctantly risen early, was already on the field, and Captain Churchhill was massing the royal infantry. Then Monmouth, eager for life, basely fled.

The rebels held out long, though hemmed in by the Life Guards and Blues. Accustomed to wield flails and mining tools, Monmouth's men were stubborn with their scythes and musket butts. They beat back Oglethorpe, and struck down Sarsfield. Their incessant cry was, "Ammunition, for God's sake, ammunition!" Just then the king's guns dashed up from the Bridgewater-road, the Bishop of Winchester having lent his coach-horses and traces for the purpose. There was a want of gunners; but the officers helped to load, point, and fire, and sent the shot tearing through the ranks of rebel pikes. They wavered, they retired, they broke. Then straight through the hot smoke the Blues swept down with savage

swords, while Faversham's infantry came streaming across the ditch. The Mendip miners struggled bravely for a minute or two, but they were soon felled or ridden down. Then the rout became total, and the moor was covered with shouting and screaming men. Three hundred of the king's men lay dead beside Bussex Rhine, but a thousand of the rebels also strewed the moor.

Faversham, an insolent cruel soldier, who had been inured to licence and devastation in the great wars of Louis the Fourteenth, ordered many of the prisoners to instant execution. Among these was a young Somersetshire lad, famous for his swift running. Faversham, with a brutal laugh, made him a promise of life if he would outrun one of the wild marsh horses. A halter was then tied to his neck and attached at the other end to the horse, on which a soldier sat to urge the creature to the fullest speed. The prisoner, maddened by the hope of life, leaped away and kept up with the horse for three quarters of a mile, from Bussex Rhine to Brentford Bridge. The cruel general, rather enraged than pleased at the performance of the tremendous feat, instantly ordered the young rebel to the gallows. Another prisoner was more fortunate, in not relying merely on a bad man's word. He had to leap for his life—so far in three leaps. He leaped, and at the third bound dashed into an adjoining wood and escaped pur-

suit. His name was Swayne, and three stones on the Shapwick estate are still pointed out as Swayne's Jumps. The next day a line of twenty gibbets rose on the road leading from Weston Zoyland to Bridgewater; on every gibbet swung a rebel. A day or two afterwards, a gaunt greybearded man in a shepherd's dress was seized in a field of peas on the borders of Hampshire. It was Monmouth. A few months later Jefferies opened the Bloody Assizes in Somersetshire, and in a few days hanged, drew, and quartered two hundred and thirty-three prisoners. Every village green and market-place was rendered loathsome by heads stuck on poles, or corpses hung in irons. Monmouth, rash as unfortunate, perished on Tower-hill, while Faversham was made Knight of the Garter and Captain of the First Life Guards. One of the last satires of the Duke of Buckingham was directed against this lazy, cruel, and incompetent general of King James.

The crow leaving the fine old tower of Weston Zoyland, from whence he has looked down on Sedgemoor, swoops back to Bridgewater, and rests on the gable of an Elizabethan house in Mill-street. It was here that the great Admiral Blake was born. His father was a merchant, and his mother the co-heiress of a knightly family. A blunt, bold, honest man, he distinguished himself during the Civil Wars at the head of his troop of horse, surprising Taunton, and de-

fending it desperately during two sieges. His services to the Parliament were of the most splendid kind; for he destroyed the royalist fleet, took the Channel Islands, and beat the Dutch about the narrow seas. He bullied the Bey of Tunis, and with incredible daring he sailed into the Bay of Teneriffe, and burnt some Spanish galleons which he could not carry off. He died on his return home, just as he was entering Plymouth Sound. Blake did not commence his naval career till he was fifty years of age, yet he became one of our greatest admirals. Clarendon says he was the first person who disdained to keep his ship and men out of danger, and taught sailors to despise land forts, which he proved to be more noisy than dangerous. When people expressed their scruples of serving Cromwell, Blake said nobly, "Our business is not to mind state affairs, but to prevent foreigners fooling us." Blake's most desperate action was off the Goodwin Sands, when he bore down on Van Tromp's eighty vessels with only forty men-of-war, but was beaten off, losing six ships. Van Tromp then sailed through the Channel proudly, with a broom at his masthead, to show that he had swept the English from the seas. Blake was no man to bear this; three months after he swooped at a Dutch convoy of merchantmen and eighty vessels, capturing eleven men-of-war and thirty merchantmen—a glorious prize. A few months later came our greater

victory, when Van Tromp was killed; but Blake had gone home before that from ill-health. Blake was as honest as he was brave, and after all the galleons and plate vessels he had taken, did not leave five hundred pounds behind him. The Royalists cast Blake's bones out of Westminster Abbey, but they could not erase his name from our history.

Before taking wing for the Isle of Athelney, the crow, in a statistical humour, poises over the Bath brick-works, just above the bridge, to observe the curious paste of clay and sand left by the Parret's ebb and flood tides. This brown slime, here dried and moulded into squares, is formed every year into eight million Bath bricks, which produce from twelve thousand pounds to thirteen thousand pounds annually.

Straight as a black-plumed arrow the crow bears now from Bridgewater to the Isle of Athelney, that island among the marshes of the Parret and the Tone, once a swampy forest, where Alfred sheltered himself for a year in a neat-herd's cottage, from the Danes. It was here he received that historical blow from the angry woman for having let her cakes burn while he pondered over the future of his country. From these river-side marshes he made those forays on the Danes that culminated in his great Wiltshire victory. While at Athelney, tradition has it that he lost a favourite jewel of gold and enamel, which had

been fastened to a necklace. Dropped in the underwood, trodden into the river sand, fallen among the rushes or the ferns, the ornament remained for centuries in the Athelney earth, unclaimed, unseen, till, extraordinary to relate, it was turned up by chance in the seventeenth century. It is now in the Ashmolean Museum, and one of our most precious relics. Oval in shape, and of Byzantine workmanship, it bears the inscription, "Alfred had me made." When the Danes were crushed under foot, Alfred founded an abbey at Athelney, of which few traces are now left; but rude coffins and other relics have been found near the spot where Alfred reared the shrine in gratitude for the protection of Heaven, and a stone pillar still marks the place.

The crow pauses over Halswell House to recall an old tradition about the Tyntes—an old crusading tradition it is, for the family have been planted here on the Milverton road longer than the oaks of their domain. The first Tynte, a young knight of the Arundel family, fought bravely at Ascalon, riding down the Saracens till the white housings of his horse were bordered crimson deep with Infidel blood. Richard Cœur de Lion, observing him hewing among the Moslem sabres, declared that the maiden knight had borne himself like a lion, and had done work enough for six crusaders; whereupon he conferred on him, for arms, a lion argent on a field gules, be-

tween six crosslets of the first, and for motto, "*Tynctus cruore Saraceno.*"

It was at Charlinch, near Bridgewater, that that remarkable fanatic, Mr. Prince, founded his Agapemone, and drove about his barouche and four horses, followed by outriders and bloodhounds. In 1851 sixty-five persons lived at Charlinch, spiritual vassals to the founder of the "Family of Love."

The crow flies faster as it approaches Taunton, till his broad wings flap rejoicingly over the pleasant town above the river Tone. The landscape is purely English; the vale studded with orchards, is green with pastures, cottages and manor-houses, and village spires are scattered over it "in gay abundance," to the very foot of the blue Quantock and Blackdown hills, that rise like huge billows in the horizon. Taunton used to be famous for its cloth manufacture, and the vale was so fertile with "the zun and zoil" alone that there was a quaint Somersetshire proverb mentioned by Fuller:

> "Ch' was bore at Taunton Dean;
> Where should I be bore else?"

Taunton was both a Roman and a Saxon station. The crow has only to alight on St. Mary's richly-carved tower to gather up as many legends as there are grains of wheat in a corn-field. Early in the civil wars the town among the orchards was besieged by

Sir Richard Granville and eight thousand audacious and rapacious cavaliers, while Cromwell was detained at Windsor, preparing for the heavy blow shortly to be struck at Naseby. Taunton tormented with ceaseless fire, though half taken and half burned, still held out under Blake. Many an anxious reconnoitre must Blake have made in those days from St. Mary's or St. James's roofs, to see where the enemy swarmed thickest round the earthworks, where the cannon blazed most, or where the hot sally of the townsmen was being most strenuously pushed forward towards the Royalist tents. Colonel Weldon was at last sent by Fairfax with four thousand men, and Granville, dreading the approach of the main body, raised the siege. From St. Mary's towers Blake must have seen, with calm delight, the enemy's masses of foot at last loosen and scatter over the valley. But the fever had only slackened for an interval. Granville, reinforced by three thousand horse, under the dashing Goring, again advanced to Taunton, and shut up Weldon and his men in the half ruined town. After the heavy blow at Naseby, Fairfax however drove Goring's Cavaliers from Taunton, beat them at Langport, and finally took Bridgewater, with the king's garrison of two thousand six hundred men.

In this second siege of Taunton, when the Cavaliers were raging round the town, Blake behaved like a

Roman of the old rock. The streets round the Priory and King Ina's Castle were soon mere hulks of shattered walls and half destroyed roofs. Beams, tiles, and bricks had poured in avalanches of ruin over the roadways. The mortars and grenades of the cavaliers had crushed walls and splintered in doorways. Ten thousand Cavaliers raged outside the ramparts, roaring for the blood of these resolute and dangerous Puritans. Blake was already known as a daring partisan horseman, and the officer who had resisted Rupert's men at the storming of Bristol, when all the city besides had surrendered. The Cavalier provost-marshal's rope was thirsting for him. Shot and powder grew scarce, the fire from the town perceptibly slackened, except at those volcanic moments when Goring tried to storm. Food, too, was hard to get. No droves of oxen now from the valley, no fat sheep from the Mendip Downs. The soldiers became pale and hollow-eyed, the women silent and hopeless, the children querulous and fretful. Blake had already announced his intention of putting the garrison on rations of horse-flesh. There was only one hog left in the town, and that animal was too useful to be eaten. Poor wretch! it was led round the walls daily, and whipped at intervals, to induce the Cavaliers to think that fresh supplies had been secretly thrown into the town.

Still the people's spirit never failed. Death in no

shape—furious as the butchering soldier, or ghastly as the shrouded famine—could subdue the staunch men. They knew that they fought for God and the truth. As for Blake, he swore he would eat his boots before he surrendered, though the enemy had shown their fierce faces already at a practicable breach, and had even planted cannon in part of the suburbs.

At last the storm began to clear; one May day the enemy's fire relaxed. There were shouts and counter shouts; the king's banner receded; the tents were lifted. Fairfax came dashing in. The town was relieved, the siege was raised. That eleventh of May remained a festival for a century after that. Soon after the Restoration, when every turncoat was drinking the king's health on his knees, the Taunton men still kept this holiday with stubborn faith and truth. The Court, vexed at this, and roused by Tory remonstrances from Somersetshire, filled up the Taunton moat, and demolished the walls that had held out so gallantly, when brave Somersetshire hearts were behind them. The puritanical epoch was long kept up in Taunton by the preaching and exhortation of that celebrated Dissenter, Joseph Allein, author of the still well-known tract, "An Alarm to the Unconverted." He was thrown into prison by the Cavaliers, and died worn out by toil and persecution; but his precepts were not forgotten.

No wonder, then, that when Monmouth arrived he

was welcomed as a deliverer from the Papists. Every door and window in Taunton was adorned with flowers. The men wore green boughs in their hats. A procession of girls presented Monmouth with an embroidered flag woven with royal emblems. The base-born young rake had even the hypocrisy to say, "I come to defend the truths contained in the Bible, and to seal them, if it must be, with my blood." A month more and he was the first to fly at Sedgemoor. It was at Taunton his evil advisers urged the son of Lucy Waters to allow himself to be proclaimed king in the market-place. King Monmouth—within twenty-four hours had set a price on the head of his hook-nosed uncle, and forbidden people to pay the usurper's taxes. As the doomed army, on the twenty-first of June, marched from Taunton, Ferguson, the duke's worst adviser, a spy and a conspirator, waved his sword and cried out to the Taunton townspeople in the craziness of his vanity—

"Look at me—you have heard of me. I am Ferguson, the famous Ferguson, the Ferguson for whose head many hundred pounds have been offered."

And this was the duke's prime minister—fitting minister for such a pretender!

After Sedgemoor, the dreadful vengence of James fell fiercely on Taunton. Faversham had left at Bridgewater, Colonel Percy Kirke, a cruel licentious soldier, who had served against the Moors at Tangier, and

acquired there all the African's sensuality and hard-heartedness. He had persecuted the Jews, flogged, and even murdered, his soldiers, extorted bribes, till his regiment, the most savage and dissolute in the service, became known ironically as Kirke's Lambs. They bore on their flag a Paschal Lamb, as a sign they had fought against the Infidel. Taunton trembled when this monster entered the town, followed by two carts full of wounded and groaning rebels, and a drove of pale prisoners chained two and two. That same night many of Monmouth's men were hanged without trial from the sign-post of the White Hart. No shrive, no leave-taking, they were strangled like dogs by the mocking and brutal soldiers. The officers of Kirke's regiment caroused at the windows while the executions went on, and drunk a health every time a rebel was thrown from the ladder. When the legs of any poor wretch quivered, Colonel Kirke ordered the drums to strike up. "We'll give the rebels," he said, "music for their dancing."

One poor fellow they hanged and cut down twice. Each time he was asked if he repented of his treason, and on his saying "no, that if the thing was to do again he would do it," they hove him up. The third time they let him die, and so ended his agony. The butchers who quartered the bodies that were to be sent to the villages all round Sedgemoor waded ankle-deep in blood. One degraded fellow, suspected of

leaning to Monmouth, they compelled to assist in steeping the rebels' limbs in pitch. Macaulay in his powerful way says: "He afterwards returned to his plough, but a mark like that of Cain was upon him. He was known through the village by the horrible name of "Tom Boilman." The rustics long continued to relate that though he had by his sinful and shameful deed saved himself from the vengeance of the Lambs, he had not escaped the vengeance of a higher power. In a great storm he flew for shelter under an oak, and was there struck dead by lightning." It is said that Kirke put one hundred prisoners to death in the week which followed the battle. The savage was at last recalled, chiefly because he had sold safe conducts to rich fugitives who were willing to embark for New England.

But Taunton had no reason to rejoice when the sound of Kirke's drums died away down the valley, for the Bloody Assizes just commenced, and Jefferies, the Claverhouse of the bench, had just accepted the Great Seal. King James, in parting, had presented him with a blood-stone ring, earnest of future favours. In Hampshire Jefferies had condemned an amiable lady to be burned alive for sheltering two fugitives. It was reported that at Dorchester, when the clergyman preached mercy in his assize sermon, Jefferies grimly grinned. In a few days after he hanged seventy-four persons. He advanced by degrees to

the harvest of death. All the time the judicial butchery was going on, he swore, blustered, laughed, and joked like a drunken man. He roared that he could smell a Presbyterian forty miles off. "Thou impudent rebel," he shouted to a contumacious prisoner, "to reflect on the king's evidence! I see thee, villian—I see thee already with the halter round thy neck!" One poor trembling wretch said he was on the parish. "Then I'll ease the parish of the burden," Jefferies said; "hang him!" He even boasted that he had hanged more traitors than all the judges since the Conquest. Many of the rebels died very bravely. Abraham Holmes, an old Cromwellian, having had his arm shattered at Sedgemoor, and amputated it himself, apologised for going awkwardly up the ladder. A lad named Hewling died with such calm fortitude that his conduct touched even the soldiers.

When Jefferies entered Taunton, the pen where the sheep to be slaughtered lay thickest, he declared openly in his charge that it would not be his fault if he did not depopulate the place. The poor girls who had presented the standard to Monmouth were all thrown into prison, though some of the poor little things were children under ten years of age. They had only carried the flag at the request of their schoolmistress. The sword fell on them ruthlessly; one sickened in prison, where fever prevailed, and died

there. Another poor girl, pleading for mercy to Jefferies, was handed over by him to the gaoler, and died of despair in a few hours. The Tory member for Bridgewater undertook to exact seven thousand pounds as the ransom of these children. That sum was to be the booty of the maids of honour, for even the queen was at this time sharing in the confiscations and the sale of slaves to the plantations. Penn, a low rascal about the Court, managed the negotation for the children's ransom, but did not succeed in getting a third of the amount named by the lady traffickers in flesh and blood. The ransoms thus obtained at this time were very large—one gentleman gave Jefferies fifteen thousand pounds. Roger Hoare, a merchant at Bridgewater, paid one thousand pounds. Hundreds of poor Somersetshire men were sent as slaves for ten years to the West Indies. The voyage out was terrible indeed. Wounded men, never visited by surgeons since Sedgemoor, were thrown in heaps into the holds of small cranky vessels. The sharks soon had half of them. They could neither stand up nor sleep. The rotten biscuit and foul water were given them scantily and at long intervals. They were never suffered to go on deck for weeks together, and armed men paraded the hatchway. The hold soon became one seething mass of groaning misery. Death alone showed mercy to those unhappy wretches. In one vessel alone, Macaulay says, twenty-two con-

victs out of ninety-nine died before the vessel reached Jamaica, though after an unusually quick voyage.

After the assizes, as Fox says, all the west became an Aceldama, nothing was to be seen in it but forsaken walls, dismal gibbets, and ghostly carcases. At last Jefferies proposed "to jog homewards" after his campaign, having transported three hundred and eighty-five persons, and hanged ninety-seven. Then came the cruel confiscations and greedy divisions of the property of those dead men whose heads scowled over the church porches, or whose bodies hung beside the park gates. The Bloody Assize will never be forgotten in Taunton.

The crow, looking towards Exeter, turns a quick eye for a moment ere he rises from his last perch on St. Mary's Tower, towards Norton Fitz-Warren on the Wolverton-road. On the hill side there above the church rises an old earthwork, with a ditch and two ramparts enclosing an area of thirteen acres. The local legend is that an enormous serpent, "the loathly worm" of the old ballads, once dwelt here and devastated the surrounding country. Its ravages are supposed to be portrayed in the carving of the wood screen in the adjoining church. It is difficult to account for this universal legend unless we trace back to the primeval times when great lizard monsters perhaps still shared this earth with man. Some say

this place was once an old British town, and there is a local distich:

> "When Taunton was a furzy down,
> Norton was a market town."

It is in fact to Taunton what old Sarum is to Salisbury—that is grandfather. Perhaps some outlaw—some British chieftain of early days, fortressed himself here, and tormented the neighbourhood by taking, unasked for, tithe and toll.

The crow glances also at North Curry, not far off, because North Curry is remarkable for being the only place that at present venerates the memory of that bad son and infamous monarch, King John. Yet so strong is custom, and so indelible is the respect for the usurper at North Curry, that every Christmas John's "immortal memory" is drunk there with all the honours. Let us hope that it was originally Saint John they toasted, and that the dinner only originated in a church ale. The feast takes place at the Reeve's house, the chief dish among the pastry being a huge mince pie, ornamented with a rude effigy of the beloved murderer of Prince Arthur. Two candles weighing a pound each are then lit, and until they are burnt out the visitors at this festive Dutch auction have a right to sit bemusing themselves with "jolly good ale and old." A marble tablet in the vestry room records the sacred customs to be observed, but does not insist on inebriety.

A flight further westwards and the crow feels the fresh wind from the Blackdown Hills ruffle the sable feathers of his strong wings. He rests on a pleasant red roof, and looks up at the Wellington monument. After Talavera, where Arthur Wellesley won his peerage, he chose the name of this town for his title, because his family is supposed to derive its name from Wellesleigh, a place near Wells; and this town is near Wensley, which sounds like Wesley, the name afterwards altered to Wellesley. On being made viscount, the duke tried to purchase an estate here, but failed. In the Civil wars the Wellington people were notorious Roundheads.

CHAPTER VII.

TAUNTON TO EXETER.

THE crow has passed the frontier, and spreads his wings in sunny Devonshire air. Red Devons feed below him in the green meadows. The mossy apple boughs of countless orchards spread beneath him; homely cob walls square out the pastures; thatched cottages cheerily greet the eye.

On the honeycombed battlement of St. Peter's, the central church of the old clothing town of Tiverton, the crow first descends, lightly. This is one of those Devonshire towns that has suffered so much from fire, in consequence of the use of thatched roofs. In June, 1731, when the thatch had dried almost to tinder, a fire broke out in Tiverton, and destroyed at one fell swoop two hundred and ninety-eight of those picturesque, but dangerous, old thatched timber houses. Tiverton has produced at least one celebrated person, for Hannah Cowley, the authoress of the Belle's Stratagem, a lively and clever play, that long

held the Georgian stage, was born here in 1743. She was the daughter of Philip Parkhouse, a bookseller in the town, and she married an officer in the service of the Company.

The crow, having rested on theatre roofs before now, has pleasure in the old clothing town between the Exe and Lemar, in recalling snatches of the pleasant play by the bookseller's daughter, for was not Elliston, that incomparable lover, the Doricourt at Drury Lane in 1815, Lewis the Doricourt at Covent Garden in 1780; Wrench, Flutter; and Mrs. Orger, the Lady Frances Touchwood; and is there not a stage tradition that Miss Younge, as Letitia, always burst into real tears when she took off the mask, in the last scene, and discovered herself to Doricourt? The feigned madness of Doricourt, and the assumed rusticity of Letitia, seem stale enough now, but they delighted audiences once, and Tiverton was proud of the play the Royal family had commanded once a season for many years. In 1780 what could have brought the gallery down sooner than such expressive patriotic sentiments as those of Doricourt: "True. There I plead guilty; but I have never yet found any man whom I could cordially take to my heart and call friend, who was not born beneath a British sky, and whose heart and manners were not truly English?" Or, again: "Cursed be the hour—should it ever arrive—in which British ladies shall

sacrifice to foreign graces the grace of modesty!"

That old church on which the crow rests, has a chapel and south porch carved all over with coats of arms, and ships, woolpacks, and staple marks, by John Greenway, a cloth merchant in 1517; it has seen a good deal of fighting in its time. In the reign of Edward the Sixth, the Devonshire priests roused the commonalty in Devonshire, when Wiltshire and other counties began to ferment. Ten thousand of the rebels met under Humphrey Arundel, the Governor of St. Michael's Mount, armed themselves with bows, halberds, hackbuts, and spears, and despising Lord Russell's small force, moved on towards Exeter, carrying before them crosses, banners, holy water, candlesticks, the host covered with a canopy, and all the pomp of Catholic ritualism. But Exeter shut her gates against them, they failed in all their attacks, and Lord Russell, reinforced by Sir William Herbert and Lord Gray, bore down at last on the fanatical peasantry with some rough German horse and prompt Italian arquebusiers. The battle was fought at Cranmore, near Collipriest. Tiverton saw that day the insurgents fly before the whirling two-handed swords of the fierce German mercenaries, and the Protector had soon good tidings from Devonshire.

In the Civil wars Tiverton streets grew red again with blood freely spilt, for in 1643 the Parliament troops were chased out of it by Cavalier swords. In

1644 it was occupied in force by the king, first, and then by the Earl of Essex; and in 1645 Massey and Fairfax took it by storm. Fairfax, in his stolid way, soon dismantled the castle of the Earls of Devon, built by Richard de Redvers in 1100, and left only those ivied towers which the Carews and the crows now jointly possess; the great-fourteenth century gateway still remains.

It was during the storm that Fairfax battered the church, for the cavaliers having fortified themselves in it, dragged their guns on to the roof, and thrust their muskets out of every loop and window. It was then that the fine carved tombs of the Courtenays were trodden and struck to pieces. There was one a monument to Catherine, the daughter of Edward the Fourth, and widow of an Earl of Devonshire, and another to the admiral, the third earl, generally called "the blind and good earl." His epitaph was one of those in which the corpse itself is supposed to talk to you:

"Hoe, hoe! who lies here?
I, the good Earl of Devonshire,
With Maud, my wife, to me full dere.
We lyved together fyfty-fyve yere.
What wee gave, wee have;
What wee spent wee had;
What wee lefte wee loste."

The old almshouses, for five poor men in Gold-street, were built by the same John Greenway who

did so much for the church, and they are enriched in the same elaborate and quaint manner. They are quiet harbours for the last moorings of five old men, hiding from the noise and conflict of the world. On the wall of the chapel are the lines:

> "Have grace, ye men, and ever pray
> For the souls of John and Joan Greenway."

The eagle on a bundle of sticks (a nest), Greenway's device, is still to be seen here.

Tiverton is famous for its factory and its fifteen hundred lace-makers. Devonshire was always famous for this human spider work, so graceful and so fragile. The famous Honiton pillow lace has been now superseded by cheap machine-made bobbin net; but machinery does not think as the hand does, and the result is far less refined and intellectual. Devonshire lace making was first introduced by fugitive Flemish protestants in the reign of Elizabeth.

A short flight lands the crow on the Grecian portico of Silverton Park, not so much because the great Greek building belongs to the Egremont family, as because it enshrines that portrait of Sir Joshua Reynolds which the worthy Devonshire man painted in his honest pride and delight at being elected mayor of his native town—"an honour which he used to say had given him more pleasure than any other he had received during his life." His father had been master of the great school of Plympton. The corporation

disgracefully sold this palladium of theirs to the fifth earl of Egremont for one hundred and fifty pounds.

A skim over the Egremont shrubberies brings the crow to Bickleigh Court, once a seat of the Carews; now only a farm-house. The place recalls a thousand legends dear to schoolboy days, and not without some charm now, of that ingenious and half-crazed vagabond, Bamfylde Moore Carew, "the king of the beggars." Carew, the son of the rector of Bickleigh, was born seven years before the accession of Queen Anne. Bamfylde's scrapes began at Tiverton, where he led the stag hounds over some corn fields, and then ran away from school to avoid punishment. He joined some gipsies, and soon became conspicuous among them by his skill in disguise and begging, and his fondness for the wild, free, yet dissolute and lawless "gaberlunzie" life.

Soon after being chosen king of the beggars, Carew was arrested at Barnstaple, sent to Exeter, and there, without trial, sentenced to transportation to Maryland for five years. At this time transported men were sold to the planters. Carew soon escaped from his master, and flying to the woods, got among the Indians, and was helped by them on towards Pennsylvania. On returning to England, Carew, occasionally visiting his family in disguise, continued his career of beggar and small swindler, passing off as a shipwrecked sailor, broken-down farmer, or old

rag woman; occasionally owning himself to friends of his family, and rejoicing quite as much in his own ingenuity and the success of his disguises as in the money he obtained. He is said, in old chap books, to have made money by successes in the lottery, and to have eventually returned to Bickleigh, and died there in 1758.

It seems remarkable how such a book as the Life of Bamfylde Moore Carew could ever have remained a popular chap book for a whole century; for, except his adventures among the Indians, and the narrative of his two transportations, the biography is little but a series of tricks to extort money. One day he was an old beggar woman laden with children, in her arms and on her back; the next a burnt-out blacksmith; the day after a rheumatic miser. A mad Tom, a shipwrecked sailor, or a rat-catcher, Carew could assume any disguise at a moment's notice, always to the confusion of justices of the peace and the bleeding of the benevolent. The editor of one edition of the Life of Bamfylde Moore Carew thinks it necessary to defend his hero. "The morality of our hero," he says, apologetically, "is obvious in the various reflections he makes as he finds himself in different situations. His lessons are from the vast volume of nature; and though he passed but for a beggar, yet he *often* appears to have possessed every charm of the mind, and, what is more worthy of praise, those bet-

ter qualities of the heart without which the others are but frivolous." Modern readers find in the rogue's adventures no trace of anything but promptitude and ingenuity.

A mile or two from Bickleigh the crow flits down to Cadbury Castle, on its isolated hill, where Romans once encamped, and which in 1645 Fairfax's army occupied. It looks across the Exe to another height in Killerton Park, called Dolberry. There is an old distich about these two hills:

> "If Cadburye Castle and Dolbury Hill delven were,
> All England might plough with a golden share."

The country people declare that a flying dragon, snorting and breathing fire, has been seen at night flying between these two hills, guarding the great treasure hid in them by kings and warriors long dead. It is singular that there is another Dolberry on the Mendips, and that a rhyme almost similar gives hope of treasure there also. The time has no doubt come when a systematic investigation of all such localities as Dolberry should be made. The result would be in many cases as profitable as it would be interesting. From Cadbury many camps can be seen. They lie thick around Woodbury, Sidbury, Henbury, Dumpdon, Membury, and Castle Neroche, in Dorsetshire—all of which the warriors of Cadbury may have wished to watch and supervise. The enclosure, with a circumference of about five hundred yards, has two

fosses. In the first one there is a pit six feet deep, probably intended to collect rain water. It was excavated in 1848, and a curious finger-ring, some gold bracelets, and several styles for writing of late Roman character were found in it. They had been there for centuries within reach of any spade; so treasures often lie unnoticed under our very feet.

Swift ply the black wings through the ebb and flow of the blue air, over the fine tower of Stockleigh Pomeroy, and the grand umbrageous trees of Shobrook Park, till the crow alights softly on the central tower of Crediton Church. "Kirton," says the local proverb, "was a town when Exeter was a mere range of furze and thorns," but ages ago ancient Britons, looking from Down Head, Posbury Hill, or Blackadown, saw houses clustering here beside the river Creedy. Anglo-Saxons, with axes at their belts, and spears in their hands, must have boasted, just as Kirton men now do, of the rich Lord's meadow of Sandford, and that of all the hay in Devonshire there was no hay like Kirton hay; and of all Kirton hay, no hay like the hay of the Lord's meadow. In that broad pasture stretching down to the Creedy river, the red Devons still revel, as well they may, on the thick flowers and the fresh juicy grass.

Crediton was the birthplace of Winfred, one of the greatest of the Saxon saints—better known as St. Boniface—the first preacher of Christianity in central

Germany, and the founder of the famous monastery at Fulda, in Hesse Cassell. This saint, educated at Exeter, travelled to Rome, received a commission from Pope Gregory the Second in 719, and then went as a missionary into Bavaria and Norwegia, and preached Christianity amid the fir forests to the half savage hunters of those early ages. On his return to Rome he was made first bishop to the Archbishop of Germany, still preaching among the wild tribes, and founding churches whenever the worshippers of Thor would permit him. He built the Abbey of Fulda, in 746, but, still untiring, bravely left his abbatial splendour to plunge again among the savage Germans, and venturing into Friesland was slain with all his monks and cross bearers in the summer of 755. His works fill a dusty shelf still in old ecclesiastical libraries. Boniface was a great pioneer of civilisation among the German forests, and the fellow-countrymen of Luther owe him gratitude. This Devonshire martyr is the patron saint of innkeepers (probably in his travels the worthy man learned to value a good hotel, and on his return perhaps established an inn or two) and hence his worship by the class. For several hundred years after his martyrdom, Crediton, then famous for woollen manufactures (now driven out by shoemaking), remained the seat of the Devonshire bishops.

In 1549, when the Roman Catholic peasantry broke

out into rebellion, and bore the crucifix aloft through many a Devonshire town, the rebels gathering, too, at Crediton, built up a great barricade of carts, timber, and stones at the town's end, and fortified some barns adjoining. Sir Peter and Sir Jarvais Carew, riding from Exeter with a score or two of lances, desired to "have speech of the rebels," but, being denied access, dashed at the barricade, and either set the barns on fire, or compelled the rebels to burn them to prevent their being held against them. The rebels after this always took "the barns of Crediton" as their rallying cry.

The church at Crediton, in 1315, was the scene of one of those spurious miracles contrived in the Middle Ages to rouse the zeal of the country people. The bishops of Exeter used to reside here, and preside in the collegiate church, over the stalls filled with stately rows of eighteen canons and eighteen vicars. In August, 1315, at the feast of St. Peter ad Vincula, while Bishop Walter Stapledon (afterwards torn to pieces by a London mob) was celebrating mass, a blind man, who had been praying far away from the splendour, glitter, and perfume of the central altar, before a side shrine of St. Nicholas, suddenly recovered his sight. Some temporary attack of ophthalmia had at last passed away. The cry of "a miracle! a miracle!" passed from worshipper to worshipper, till it reached the bishop, who instantly held a chapter

in the Lady Chapel, proclaimed it as a bonâ fide miracle, and straightway the bells to instantly clash out a thanksgiving. The man was a fuller, of Keynsham, who had lost his sight in the previous Easter week, and had dreamt that he would be cured if he should visit the Church of the Holy Cross at Crediton.

In the south chancel aisle is the altar tomb of Sir John Sully, a knight who fought up and down Picardy, Saxony, and Spain, side by side with the Black Prince, and, in spite of storms of sword strokes, thousands of spear thrusts, rains of arrows, and many smashing experiences among maces and war hammers, lived till he was upwards of one hundred and five, and was then brought here calmly to his rest; and on the north side of the chancel Sir William Peryam, a chief baron of the Exchequer of Elizabeth's time, sleeps near him.

Now to the ivied bastion of old Rougemont the crow bears right on, and from the ruined citadel of Exeter surveys the grand old cathedral, the great carved tomb of so many illustrious dead, and its twenty-one tributary parish churches. Julius Cæsar, who is said to have built the Tower of London, is reported to have set his hands to work at masonry here also. It is supposed that some of the Saxon kings next inhabited Rougemont, and issued from thence their fiery menaces to the rival potentates of Dorsetshire and Wiltshire, and the hostle Britons of Berk-

shire. Then came the Dukes of Cornwall, one of whom figures in King Lear, and of whom the less said the better, history being rather oblivious about that branch of the early English peerage. The rough conqueror came here, too, swearing his great oath, "Fulgore Dei," and beat at the gates of Rougemont. He altered the castle to show his power, and then gave it to the first Earl of Devon, the husband of his niece Albreda. In Stephen's troubled reign (one long battle indeed), the usurper attacked it, burnt the outer works, and so tormented the garrison with fire that they had to empty all their wine casks to help to extinguish the flames. In the reign of Henry the Fourth, John Holland, Duke of Exeter, dwelt at Rougemont, which is, however, chiefly interesting to the crow and his flighty friends from the fact that Shakespeare mentions a tradition concerning it.

The Crookback came here once with his army, and shuddered at being told the name of the castle, as an Irish prophet had predicted that he should not live long after seeing Richmond.

> "Richmond! when last I was in Exeter,
> The mayor in courtesy showed me the castle,
> And call'd it Rouge-mont, at which name I started,
> Because a bard of Ireland told me once
> I should not live long after I saw Richmond."

Exeter, looking far away towards the warm green sea that beats upon Devon's red cliffs, was an old Brit-

ish town built long before Cæsar came, and called Caer Isc, the city on the river. Antiquaries observe that like most Celtic trading towns it has been built for safety just beyond where the river ceases to be navigable. Coins of the Greek dynasties in Syria and Egypt found here prove that Phœnician merchants must have come here many hundred years before Christ to trade for Cornish and Dartmoor tin. The Romans marched in and made it a great station. Lastly, the Saxons fortified the town on the Exe, and traded here with the Britons from across the Tamar. The Exe was the frontier then for the Damnonians, but Athelstan came and drove them pell-mell into Cornwall, and rebuilt the walls of Exeter. The Britons, cooped up among the granite rocks of Cornwall, soon had their avengers; the Danes went crowding up the Exe with their black sails and black banners, and wintered at Exeter in 876, rejoicing in the Saxon beeves and ale. They grew accustomed to the place, and pillaged it again under Sweyn, in 1003. The old red tower was always getting beaten about by stones from military engines, and chipped by crossbow bolts. William the Conqueror besieged it, wishing to seize Githa, the mother of Harold, and her daughter, but they escaped safely to Bruges. Perkin Warbeck, when joined by the Bodmin men, and calling himself Richard the Fourth, besieged Exeter, but unsuccessfully, and flying from the king's troops to Taunton,

took refuge in the New Forest. Soon afterwards surrendering himself, he broke prison, and was hanged at Tyburn.

Exeter had its share of troubles in the Civil wars. Prince Maurice took it after an eight months' siege, and then it became the king's great stronghold in the west; for he was always popular in Devonshire and Cornwall, and his proud queen resided at Exeter, and kept the nobles loyal to the flag. There she gave birth to that princess Henrietta, afterwards the Duchess of Orleans, who was eventually poisoned, and on whom Bossuet preached one of his sublimest funeral sermons. The Prince of Orange made a formal entry into the fair capital of the west on his way to take possession of King James's crown, and in 1789 old King George and Queen Charlotte were received by the mayor and aldermen of Exeter, to the delectation of the honest Devonshire people and the sardonic contempt of Peter Pindar. That sneerer, eventually so easily bought off, says:

> "Mayster may'r, upon my word,
> Poked to the king a gert long sword,
> Which he poked back agen."

The journey to Exeter, now little more than five hours by express, used to take "old Quicksilver" seventeen or eighteen hours, with horses never off the trot. It was thought wild work even at that rate, and our forefathers considered themselves desperadoes

who had accomplished great deeds when they stepped out in Fore-street, and congratulated each other at the danger well over. In 1720 a Mrs. Manley, with the spirit of an African traveller, published a book on "A stage-coach journey from London to Exeter." The ponderous vehicle started at three in the morning, stopped at ten in order that the passengers might dine, and at three P.M. cooly retired into an inn-yard to safe moorings for the night. The journey was completed in four days, and the average pace was a safe cozy four and a half miles an hour.

The crow perched complacently in the gable niche of the west front of the grand old cathedral, nestling down, so that he seems a mere black spot from below—a mere black wafer at the feet of crumbling old St. Peter, looks at the rows of angels, kings, and saints, and croaks applause at the piety of Edward the Third's lord high treasurer, Bishop Brantyngham, who, it is supposed, put together these Norman towers, flying buttresses, and lofty sheets of painted glass, all so many episodes of one great poem in stone, hallowed by the beauty of art.

Bishop Stapledon completed the choir in 1308-1326, and the four outermost bays of the choir are his also. His monument is in the choir. A figure of the Saviour stands within the canopy, and a small figure of King Edward the Second climbs up towards him. The arms of the see (two keys addorsed) adorn the sleeve of

the effigy. This bishop, who founded Exeter College, was left by Edward the Second in charge of London. In 1326, Stapledon, then Lord Treasurer of England, and a firm adherent of the king against the queen and the barons, met with a terrible death. When Isabella landed from France, determined to chase away the Spencers, her husband's favourities, and advanced on London, the weak king fled to the Welsh frontier. The bishop, as custos of the City of London, then demanded the keys of the Lord Mayor, Hammond Chickwell, and determined to curb the restless citizens, took high measures, ready to pounce on the first revolter. The populace equally alert, fearing the mayor's submissiom, and roused by Isabella's proclamations that had been hung on the new cross at Cheapside, rose in arms, imprisoned the mayor, and seized his keys. They then ran to Exeter House, in what is now Essex-street, Strand, burnt down the gates, and destroyed all the rich plate, jewels, money, and furniture. The bishop, being at the time in the fields, though almost too proud to show fear, rode straight to the northern door of St. Paul's to take sanctuary. But it was too late. The mob closed round him, tore him off his horse, stripped him of his armour, dragged him, wounded and bleeding, to Cheapside, proclaimed him there a traitor, a seducer of the king, and an enemy of the people's interests, and, chopping off his head, set it on a pole. His dis-

figured corpse was tossed into a hole in the sand in an old churchyard of the Pied Friars. His brother and some servants were also beheaded, and their bleeding and naked bodies thrown on a heap of rubbish by the river side. The body of the luckless bishop was six months afterwards disinterred, and brought to Exeter for solemn and stately burial by the queen's command.

The towers and steeples of Exeter have many traditions the crow learns as he flits from one to the other, and on the lichened and corroded stones he croaks them in crow language to the chattering starlings, who respect him greatly for his blackness and his age.

Of St. Mary Major's, in the cathedral yard, it is said that the noise of the weathercock so disturbed Catherine of Arragon, when she slept in the deanery on her way to London, that it was taken down. St. Mary Steps, in West-street, boasts an ancient clock with three quaint figures, which the townspeople call Matthew the Miller and his two sons (Matthew is really burly Henry the Eighth). The local rhyme about the old horologer's automata is,

> "Adam and Eve would never believe
> That Matthew the miller was dead,
> For every hour in Westgate tower
> Old Matthew nods his head."

If Exeter had been a Spanish city we should have

had a hundred legends about these figures, the magicians who framed them and the goblins who haunted them. From one of the church towers, after the great rebellion of Edward the Sixth's time, one of the leaders, a vicar, was hanged in his priestly robes.

Exeter is justly proud of her children. That humbly wise man, Richard Hooker, the author of the Ecclesiastical Polity, was born at Heavitree, which is a suburb. Tired of disputation, he only prayed to leave all public employment and retire to some quiet parsonage, where he might, to use his own beautiful language, "see God's blessings spring out of the earth and eat his bread in peace and privacy." One of his friends found him, tormented by his shrew of a wife, rocking a cradle while busy studying a Greek Testament. Sir Thomas Bodley, the founder of the great Oxford library, was another worthy son of Exeter. Gandy, the painter, whom Reynolds imitated and whom Kneller admired, was a third. Budgell, Addison's friend, is also on the roll, and Jackson, the composer—Incledon's master. When Incledon was ragingly jealous of Braham he used to say,

"If my dear old master could only come down from heaven and take an Exeter post-chaise, and come up to town and hear this condemned Jew, he'd soon settle the matter."

The crow, lifting from the Exeter roof, now bears swift away to the Tamar and the granite strewn and haunted moors of Cornwall.

CHAPTER VIII.

ACROSS DARTMOOR TO TAVISTOCK.

WILD country westward. The Teign, struggling on through a rocky valley, shut in by towering hills, on which the clouds rest. The crow, on the keen look out from his point of vantage, especially hovers over the old camps of Prestonbury Castle and Cranbrook Castle, hard by Fingles Bridge, because Mr. Merivale thinks that here the Britons, before they retreated back towards the Tamar, wrestled with the rapacious Romans for every inch of land; it was here, perhaps, that Titus saved his father, Vespasian, from the British axes in that western campaign when passes like this into the broken country of Dartmoor were objects of fierce contention between the legionary and his half savage foe. Providence reserved the old warrior, whom his son that day saved in a battle, which must have been Homeric in its incidents, for greater wars, and for a nobler and more royal death.

No doubt this wild scenery impressed itself on the minds of the old chieftains who encamped in its fastnesses, for the local legends are numerous here as the seeds at the back of a fern leaf. Just by Ghilston Farm stands that strange Druidical work, the Spinster's Rock, a table stone supported on three rude pillars. On this sepulchre of we know not what forgotten warrior, brave bulwark of the Cornish frontier, the crow alights, and inquiringly pecks at the green pads of moss and the blots of grey lichen, that perhaps hide some ancient epitaph.

This cromlech fell in 1862, and was replaced with great labour. The local tradition is that three spinsters (giantesses of course) erected this trophy as a mere breather, one morning before breakfast. Old writers say three young men and their father brought the stones from the highest tors of Dartmoor. Wild antiquaries, on the maddest of hobby-horses, instantly leaping at this, declare that the old man means Noah, and the three sons typify Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The Druids are supposed to have had traditions of the Deluge and the Ark, it is true, but this legend, there is no doubt, is only one of those fantastic stories which are invented to account for great achievements of the early races. The ecclesiological antiquaries, who go mad about the Ark, and see it in every logan poised on a hill-top, are scarcely

less mad than those Norse antiquaries, who find in every block of Devonshire granite an altar to Thor or Odin. The amiable Celtic enthusiasts, equally useful, see in the harmless Spinsters' Rock types of the three sisters, the choosers of the slain, the fates of the Scandinavian mythology, those dark beings who rode over battle plains to call the doomed warriors to Odin. Here in remembrance of the battles over which these shrouded beings must have hovered, some think that Danish warriors raised these stones on the hill above the river.

Accustomed to the permanence of things, we forget that the day will come when the last Abbey will fall, the last picture of the old masters perish, just as the great porcelain tower of Nankin has now gone to the ground; and only the other day Titian's chef-d'œuvre, Peter the Martyr, perished by fire. It startles one to hear now and then of a rocking stone or a cathedral spire falling—more leaves blown from the old tree. Close by the Spinsters' Rock, apropos of this, there is a logan stone lying in the channel of the stream, embedded firmly in the sand, though Polwele mentions it, in 1797, as fixed on the hill above, where he moved it with one hand.

More wild hills, golden with furze, where Roman and Briton once rolled in the death-lock, stabbing, hewing, cursing, shouting to their gods, and staining the

granite blocks with blood, and the crow alights with a sidelong drift, as light as a snowflake, on White Stone, where the local legend is that King Arthur and the enemy of mankind flung quoits at each other; which quoits, now transformed into shapeless blocks of granite, remain to indisputably confirm the legend.

Moreton Hampstead, close by the White Stone, boasts an old cross, and an elm tree at the entrance of the churchyard. The local tradition (worth recording for the crow's legendary aerial tour) is that this tree was formerly the very centre of the old village festivities. Here the rude forefathers of the hamlet met; on the lowly horizontal boughs of this tree a stage used to be erected for dancing, the fiddler working his elbow merrily from a branch above.

A flight forward, and the crow, passing haunts of the raven and the fox, granite altars, wooded hills, and mill-streams, skims to that strangest of all the Devonshire logans, the Nutcracking Rock, at a rocky ridge by Lustleigh Cleave, and not far from Monaton. This logan can be moved with a little finger, and the country boys crack nuts at the points where the keel of one logan strikes against its supporter. It is at Monaton, close by (most credulous of villages), that there was once a monster of a snake that haunted the valley—a monster with a body as big as a man's, with real legs, broad sail wings, and a hiss that could be heard for miles. It is impossible to account for the

prevalence of these mystical snake legends in Devonshire.

The crow's black wings strike forth now for the source of the Dart, that river so sudden in its anger, so wild, so treacherous. The legend runs that the river every year demands a victim.

> "River of Dart, river of Dart,
> Every year thou claimest a heart."

The doomed man, till the day comes, ploughs calmly in the moorland villages, fishes in the Teign valley, drives on the western roads, hurries in western trains, goes here, goes there, but, sooner or later, he *must* come, at the destined hour, the destined moment, to the river, swollen and clamorous for its victim, and, struggle as he may, he is at once hurried to his death.

Swift over the borders of Dartmoor, where hills are crowned with granite ruins, where bogs and oak woods mingle with ploughlands and little green carpets of pasture, the bird alights, a mere unobserved speck of black, on the grey tower of that bleak, out-of-the-world place, Widdicomb-in-the-Moors. It is shut in by rocky hills, and surrounded by the sites of British villages, British roadways, and relics of old Druid worship. This tranquil place, sheltered by it primæval sycamore trees, had a ghastly visit from King Death in October, 1638. The village was gathered in the church, the prayer was being said,

the hymn sung, when gradually the air grew darker, and a storm began to gather. Alarmed looks were exchanged, children drew closer to their mothers. Suddenly, after some flashes of cross lightning, a ball of fire burst through one of the windows and broke like a red-hot shell among the frightened and scattering people. At the same moment the roof and tower were struck, and the stones of the steeple fell in a shower, "as fast," says the local historian, "as if they had been thrown down by a hundred men," while a pinnacle of the tower also sank in. Four persons were killed on the spot, and sixty-two were wounded, some by the fire and others by the stones. There could be no doubt of the author of this calamity. Some mysterious guilt must have rested upon the village, for an old woman, who kept a little public-house on a lonely edge of the moor, afterwards remembered that just as church went in a tall lame man dressed in black, riding a powerful black horse, inquired the way to Widdicomb Church, and called for a stoup of cyder. Afraid of losing his way on the moor, he wanted her to show him to the church; but the old woman was rather cautious, for she observed that the cyder he drank smoked and hissed as it went down his throat, and as he stumbled upon his horse a sort of cloven hoof protruded from his boot. Half an hour after this same gentleman in black cast the red-hot fireball into Widdicomb Church. There is a

saying among the fishermen of the south coast of Devon when it snows that Widdicomb folks are picking their geese.

The crow has now twenty miles of moor to flap his wings over. Desolate tracts of coarse grass and reeds, whortleberry and moss, valleys thick bushed with fern and furze, central oozing masses of morass that swell and burst with the rain, and are the sources of half the Devonshire rivers; bare, wind-swept tors, consecrated in old times to the gods of the Druids, and crowned with rocks that are now like ruined castles, now like giants or wild beasts. Watchful over miles of heather, and moss, and red grass, and rushes, the crow bears on in unimpeded flight to the strange spot, Cranmere Pool, that little bright oasis among the Dartmoor morasses, where the country people say lost spirits, purgatorially imprisoned, are to be heard at night when the wind is loudest, wailing in the bitterness of their despair.

The one hundred and thirty acres of Dartmoor are supposed to have been once a forest, and in King John's time were an asylum for deer and wild cattle. Henry the Third gave the moor to Richard Duke of Cornwall, and in Edward the Third's reign it became part of the Duchy. No wonder that superstition still holds Dartmoor as a stronghold. Even now, on wild stormy nights, when even the dwarf oaks of Wistman's wood crouch lower before the blast, Woden the

swart "master" is still heard urging his "wish hounds" from tor to tor, chasing goblins from glen to glen. The brown man of the woods still starts up to scare the traveller as he passes the workings of the old tin miners, and in curdling mist or drifting snow malicious pixies often mislead travellers, and beguile them to their death. Many a horseman indeed have these cruel pixies led to "the Dartmoor stables," as the most dangerous of the morasses are sardonically called. By moonlight, too, under the tors the little pixies hold their revels, and, ceasing to work men mischief, dance, feast, and sing.

The crow rests in its flight at Crockern Tor, because there the old Stannary Court used to be held; and as late as 1749 the tinners met there in Parliament, and seated on granite benches under the open sky of that cold damp region, discussed their preliminary ancient laws, and their disputes, then adjourning to one of the adjacent towns. There are records of an Earl of Bath in old times attending the meetings in this strange place, attended by several hundred retainers, and with half the country at his back. This was an old British custom of extreme antiquity. The Isle of Man has still its parliament hill, and it is well known that the ancient Britons held their assizes and great palavers in their great stone circles and turf amphitheatres.

But it is up the stream of the Dart in that ghostly

valley bounded by Crockern Tor and Little and Great Bardown, the slopes of which are strewn with countless tombstones of granite, and the distant ridge of which is crowned by a petrified wild beast that is known to the wild huntsman's hounds as Rowtor, that the crow peeringly, as if a murdered man lay there, hovers above the strangest place in all the moor—the Wistman's Wood. This is a crouching humble remnant of the great forest through whose green glades the wild deer once leaped, and whose broad green boughs shed blossoms on the helmeted heads of the knights of Richard of the Lion Heart. The dwarfed oaks of this enchanted wood, that seems blighted by some curse, are festooned with ivy and matted with moss. They spread their matted heads above a thorny, adder-haunted confusion of granite blocks, crushed down and kept down by the tyrannous moor winds. These stunted trees, feathered with ferns, and encumbered with choking parasites, have been struggling for a livelihood in this forlorn place ever since the Conqueror first sprang from his boat upon the Hastings shore. Old records prove that beyond dispute. When the Briton wore the collar of gold, and wielded his bronze axe for a sceptre, they were here; long after, when the Briton was a mere hunted fugitive, cowering in the brake as the Roman trumpets sounded over the tors, the dwarf trees were still crowding together in ab-

ject submission to the rude elements. The Plantagenets passed, the Tudors and the Stuarts, and still the wood, under the curse, struggled on. The average height of the trees is only ten or twelve feet, but many reach only the stature of a man. The local saying is that in Wistman's Wood there are five hundred oaks five hundred feet high, meaning that each tree averages one foot in height. The antiquarian theorists have, of course, been hard at this wood, whittling out paradoxies. A. insists that this was one of those "groves in stony places" mentioned in Scripture as dedicated to Baal and Ashtoroth. In such a rocky valley the priests of Baal may have shouted to their gods and cut themselves with flints when Elisha mocked the tardiness of their deity. B. is equally sure that this was a grave of Woden, who still hunts with his spectral hounds over the quaking morasses, where even the fox can scarcely pass. The Phœnician tin streamers and the fugitive Britons who afterwards hid here brought these wild traditions to the moor, and there they still linger in cramped growth, like the crabbed knotted trees of the Wistman's Wood. By the old Cyclopean bridges that the Britons piled across the Dart in these places, beside their overthrown cromlechs, and the logans fallen from their mystic balance, the legends of Odin and his hell hounds still linger, fitting the place as thoroughly as the wall-flower does the ruin, or the

mushroom-ring the meadow. Here alone, like the last of an otherwise extinct race, the traditions of the old mythology remain, and will remain perhaps for ever. They befit the forest blighted by witches, the No Man's Land, the howling waste, the eternal wilderness, the primeval barrens of Dartmoor, and should be studied on the spot where the heather is most purple, the moss greenest and softest, among the spectral tors filmed with shadows, when the streams are blue as the sky, and the rocks are grey in the sunshine; or, better still, beside the swamp where the snipe calls and the bittern booms, when the autumn streams, swollen by rain, come sounding down the rocky valleys.

It is a singular thing how some places seem set apart by nature for scenes of suffering, flight, tribulation, sorrow; neither the wandering shepherds of Abel's race, nor Cain's, the striving tillers of the field, ever pitched their tents at Dartmoor; but to the wounded and the unhappy, the defeated and the oppressed, its rocks were always ramparts. The Briton fled there from the Roman, the Briton fled there from the Saxon, and the Saxon fled there from the Norman. Even later, Dartmoor was still a city of refuge, for in the French war ten thousand French prisoners were kept in the great walled pound at Princes Town, shut in by double walls, a military road, endless sentinels, and outside by an enceinte of ceaseless mist and rain. The sentries then had large bells, which they

rung at intervals during great fogs, to warn each other, to alarm the Napoleonists, and to guide belated travellers. Then, when peace came, the prison, for a long time a mere landmark, was turned into a naphtha manufactory. In 1850, it again became a prison, and now once more the escaped convict occasionally skulks behind the trees, and seeks shelter with the fox and the snake, fitting companions, where the hounded Briton, his noble forefather, once fled from the Roman spears. There in the morass, with the plover screaming over head, the Artful Dodger may starve out a dismal day or two safe from the crank and the cruel toil of the granite quarry.

A flap of the crow's wing drives the inquisitive bird through the blue Devonshire air from the lonely convict prison to Fitz's Well, whose white granite slab still bears the initials of John Fitz, of Fitzford, near Tavistock, and the date 1568. This is a record of Devonshire superstition, being placed over a spring by the knight and his lady, in Elizabeth's reign. One day, pixy led, they lost their way on the moor, and when worn out and hopeless, came suddenly, to their joy, upon this refreshing water. These pixies, who killed in the clefts of the granite rocks, occupy an important place in Devonshire mythology. The peasantry drop pins or other offerings when they pass their haunts, and children, dreading lest elfin mothers should adopt them, do not venture near pixy haunted

places after sunset. These goblins hide, too, their gold among the tors. They are heard on dark nights galloping by on horses they have borrowed from the farmers, and they pound their cyder in Sheeps Tor caverns.

Far above the sacred circles and stone avenues of Black Tor, the crow passes silently without even a caw of protest or greeting, till he comes over Fox Tor, and there he alights with a bold swoop upon a legend of Edward the Third's reign. The story goes that, at the time when Cressy was talked of as Inkerman is now, John Childe, of Plymstoke, a knight of fortune, who was devotedly fond of hunting, was benighted. Mists rose, pixies lured him on with false lights, snow set in in blinding flakes, there was no help and no shelter, so John Childe, hard driven at last, stabbed his horse, then cut the poor beast open, and crept into its bowels for shelter. But all in vain. That night he perished. The monks of Tavistock, hearing of the mysterious disappearance of the knight, and of his intention (often expressed) of leaving his lands to the church in which he should be buried, at once seized cross, torch, and crozier, and started over the deep snow for the moor, searching everywhere in the white drifts for the lost man. At last they found Childe under a snowy tomb in a morass under Fox Tor, and by him his will, written with horse's blood.

"The fyrste that fyndes and brings me to my grave,
The lands of Plymstoke they shall have."

Whether the will was found there or not by the monks, this at least is certain, that they produced it in due form afterwards. But though they did hurry off with the corpse, greedily anxious for the reward, the people of Plymstoke were laying in wait for them at a ford where they would pass. The monks, however, were not going to be caught so easily. Changing the road, they threw a bridge over the river near the abbey, reached Tavistock in safety, produced the indisputable will, and gained the lands. A cross was erected to Childe by the grateful monks, at the foot of Fox Tor, and so stood till about twenty years ago, when some ignorant workmen destroyed it in the absence of their master. The story, however, we regret to confess, must be very old or else untrue, for Plymstoke belonged to the Tavistock of Benedictines as the learned author of Murray's "Devonshire and Cornwall" observes, before the Conquest. The same legend, too, is found in the life of St. Dunstan.

A little beyond Merrivale bridge, that moorland hamlet scarcely yet out of the wilderness, the crow casts his quick eye on druid circles, rock pillars, and cromlechs, dating back to the legendary time of Devonshire mythology when wolves infested the valleys and winged serpents the hills. The hut circles here were used as market-places when the plague devas-

tated Tavistock. The townspeople, sad and hopeless, fresh from the graves of their fathers and children, pale, bandaged, and muffled up, afraid to give or receive contagion, came here and placed their money in these stone circles, and took away the provisions brought for them by agreement by the scared country people.

Far away now from Hounslow and its haunted heath, Berkshire, Somersetshire, and Wiltshire, all gone down behind the horizon, the crow leaves the moor, that shattered heap of granite, and sweeping over the vale of the Tavy, alights on the nearest roof of Tavistock, that thriving town among the hills, with Dartmoor tors grey in the distance. On the ruins of the abbey the crow rests to gather traditions of the old abbots—the good, bad and indifferent. The abbey was dedicated to St. Runion, a forgotten Cornish bishop, whose anatomical relics were brought here by the founder, Ordgar, a Saxon alderman, who held all Devonshire, indeed every town or city between Frome and Exeter. He was father of Elfrida, the wife of King Edgar, and his son Ordulph completed and endowed the building. Ethelred confirmed its privileges, and so by degrees the chancel walls grew, the nave roof spread, the tower rose, the great windows bloomed into colour, the organ's music vibrated through the aisles, the incense fumed, the boys' voices rose with angel songs to heaven, and the piety of

those ages perpetuated itself in that great casket of stone. But soon faith grew chill, wealth corrupted the heart of the chief religious house in the two western counties, and the wealthiest, too, of all but that of the Augustinians at Plympton, and it became the abode of dissolute and revelling monks, fat, gross, cider-swilling creatures, shunned by honest people and dreaded by the virtuous. Abbot Livingus, the friend of Canute, who rebuilt the abbey that Sweyn and his Danes had burnt, would have shuddered at such inmates; and the learned and pious Aldred, who offered the golden chalice at the Holy Sepulchre, who brought home the sacred palm branch from the Jordan, and who afterwards consecrated both Harold and his slayer, the Conqueror, would have spurned such sons of Belial from the shrine of St. Runion.

So day by day the old faith grew colder, and pictures and emblems, once so useful as appeals to the senses of unlettered worshippers, before the introduction of printing, degenerated into mere inducements to idolatry. The Tavistock abbots grew rich, proud, dissolute, and discipline grew slack in the convents. Abbot John de Courtenay loved hunting better than preaching, and the monks ran riot; while Abbot Cullyng, also deposed by the Bishop of Exeter, connived at private feasts of the monks, and permitted them to appear in Tavistock as gallants of the period

in buttoned tunics and long-beaked Polish boots. The vengeance of Heaven found at last the fitting hand. Cromwell, Earl of Essex, destroyed part of the abbey; then Henry the Eighth confiscated it, and bestowed it on Lord John Russell, his favourite, and to whose descendant it still partly belongs. It was worth nine hundred pounds a year then. Since then it has been parted among various devastators. The Bedford Hotel stands on the site of the chapter house, the refectory is a Unitarian chapel; the north gateway is a public library, and the still house adorns the vicarage grounds. The abbey, bad as were its inmates, deserved a better fate, if it were only for the fact that the second printing press in England was set up here.

Just outside the town, on the new Plymouth road, the crow alights on the gateway of Fitzford, an old Cavalier mansion, of which this entrance alone remains. It was one of this family from whom the well near Princes Town on Dartmoor is named—Sir Richard Grenville, one of King Charles's generals, married the Lady Howard, the heiress of Fitzford, and inherited the property. This lady, the legend says, had previously removed three husbands; tradition holds her as specially accursed, and still punished for her crimes in the place where they were committed. Transformed as a hound, she is condemned nightly to run from the old gateway of Fitzford House to

the park at Okehampton between midnight and cock-crow, and to return to Tavistock with a single blade of grass in her mouth. She will be released when all the grass in the park has in this slow, steady way been picked.

In 1645, Tavistock was visited by Prince Charles, when Plymouth was being invested by his father's army. The gay youth is said to have always remembered with horror the continued wet weather at the town by the banks of the Tavy; but it is nothing to Dartmoor, where the Atlantic vapours are perpetually condensing on the cold tors, and the local rhyme is:

> "The west wind always brings wet weather,
> The east wind wet and cold together,
> The south wind surely brings us rain,
> The north wind blows it back again."

The crow, searching through Tavistock, finds St. Eustace Tower, a spot upon which it is worth alighting; because in this church are preserved the gigantic bones either of some primeval elephant or of Ordulph, the son of that Alderman Ordgar who founded Tavistock Abbey. Great stories (in every sense) are told of the Saxon champion. When he came to Exeter with King Edward the Confessor, Ordulph is said to have grown enraged at the absence of the porter who should have opened the city gates; so, leaping off his horse, he wrenched the bars

out with his hands, and dragged down parts of the city wall. Then, driving in the hinges of the gate with his strenuous feet, he burst open the door. He is said to have been in the habit of bestriding a river ten feet broad that ran near the house, and chopping off with his knife the heads of deer and oxen with as much *sang-froid* as gardeners lop celery.

Tavistock is specially proud of her greatest son, "the old warrior," as Devonshire country people quaintly call Francis Drake, who was born at Crowndale, one mile to the south-west, at a house long since removed from the crow's sight. His favourite residence was Buckland Abbey on the Tavy, four miles from the town. They still preserve there his portrait by Jansen, his sword, his ship drum, and the Bible which he carried with him round the world. The house was built by Sir Francis on the pleasant site of an old Cistercian abbey, given him by Queen Elizabeth. The barn and belfry still remain, and four arches of the central tower are built into the garrets. In the Abbey orchard hard by he paced, musing of Darien and the Pacific, of Spanish galleons and pieces of eight. Let the crow for a moment be biographical. This terror of the Spaniards was the son of a poor yeoman on the banks of the Tavy. In the days of persecution his father fled into Kent, and in Elizabeth's reign, took orders and was chose vicar of Upnor church, near where the royal fleet usually anchored.

Francis became a sailor in a small coaster, and his master eventually leaving him his bark and equipment, he grew a thriving man. Suddenly fired by the exploits of Hawkins against the Spaniards "in the Golden South Amerikies," Drake started for Plymouth, sold his ship, and joined Hawkins's last expediton to the Spanish Main. Losing all in this venture, Drake swore revenge on Spain, and sailed off with three fishing boats and seventy-three men and boys to plunder Spanish towns, burn Spanish ships, and seize Spanish wealth anywhere, whether on sea or land. He returned to Plymouth, his frail vessels brimming with gold, and all the townspeople naturally came running from church to welcome the hero.

In his next venture with five small vessels and one hundred and sixty-four men, Drake circumnavigated the world, and reached home after an eventful voyage of two years and nearly ten months, having taken a plate ship and plundered half the sea-port towns of Chili and Peru. It was on this expedition that he quaintly thanked God for bringing him among Christian people, when he saw a gibbet on the coast of Patagonian. From that time forth Drake was a thorn in the side of Spain. Half patriotic, half buccaneer, he ravaged the coast of Spain, destroyed four castles and one hundred vessels, and, in fact, "singed the King of Spain's beard" all over.

This brave man invaded Portugal; discovered the

secret of the Spanish trade with India; and helped to shatter the Armada. Several Spanish admirals died of broken heart at the success of Drake. Then came the miserable expedition to the West Indies, when the leaders quarrelled and everything went wrong. Baskerville failed to cross the Isthmus of Darien and burn Panama; Hawkins died of vexation; fever broke out at Nombre de Dios; and Drake died, partly of disease and partly of a broken heart. The sailors lowered him to his grave in the sea off Portobello:

"The waves became his winding sheet, the waters were his tomb,
But for his fame the ocean sea was not sufficient room."

For a smaller mercy Tavistock is also grateful, namely, for being the birthplace of William Browne, a humble contemporary of Spenser and Shakespeare, the author of Britannia's Pastorals, a poem highly eulogised by Lambe, Hazlitt, and all that school. Browne was a tutor to the Earl of Carnarvon, who was slain at the battle of Newbury. He acquired a competency under the patronage of the Earl of Pembroke, purchased an estate, and wrote pastoral verses, wanting in vigour, but never deficient in elegance. Selden, Drayton, and Ben Jonson admired him, but he soon passed out of mind. His Inner Temple Masque, produced at court, was not printed till a hundred and twenty years after his death, and all his poems indeed would probably have perished but for a single copy of them preserved by Warton.

Milton is supposed to have imitated him, and carried him further in L'Allegro and Lycidas. In his prettiest episode, The Love of the Walla and the Tavy, Browne sings the praises of a brook that runs past Kilworthy and the seat of the Glanvilles. One of the choicest passages of the Tavistock poet is his description of a rose:

> "Look, as a sweet rose fairly budding forth
> Betrays her beauties to the enamoured thorn,
> Until some keen blast from the envious north
> Kills the sweet bud that was but newly born.
> Or else her rarest smells delighting
> Make herself betray,
> Some white and curious hand inviting
> To pluck her thence away."

The Glanvilles, too, were of Tavistock. They were lawyers by right of race. The son of a judge of the Common Pleas, Sir John was speaker and king's serjeant before the Civil war. The Puritans took away his seat in Parliament, and sent him to prison to note cases and judgments behind the bars of the Tower. At the Restoration he was again safe for high rank, when death stepped in and called him out of court. He was made serjeant in company with Dew and Harris, two other Devonshire lawyers, and Fuller describes the three as thus spoken of:

> One { gained / spent / gave } as much as the other two.

Lastly, Tavistock boasts justly of Mrs. Bray, who

has made the bowers of the Tamar and Tavy the scenes of her pleasant stories, Ford of Fitzford, Henry de Pomeroy, and Trelawny of Trelawne.

Near Kilworthy, the seat of the Glanvilles, the crow alights on one of the trees of Rowdon wood, remembering that a strange and exceptional whirlwind visited this place in 1768. Meteorologists have as yet ascertained but little of the causes of these sudden convulsive movements in the air. Change of temperature, conflicts of hot and cold air, produce these re-actions; that we know, but no more. In this case the stream of storm swept through the wood, cutting a passage of about forty yards in width, tearing up huge oaks by the roots, as if they had been radishes, and carrying their branches off like drift in a torrent; it then rolled up the valley of the Tavy, and exhausted its rage in the barren wilderness of Dartmoor. Its coming and its going were alike mysterious.

On his way to Plymouth the crow descends, near Lamerton, on the chimney of Collacombe Barton, the old seat of the Tremaynes, built by Sir Thomas Hide in the reign of King James. It was garrisoned for King Charles and taken by the parliament men. Fuller describes two brothers of this family, who were twins. Nicholas and Andrew could only be distinguished by the colour of their doublets and the plumes in their hats. They felt like pain even when

apart, and loved to walk, travel, sit, sleep, eat, and drink together; Providence, sympathising with their friendship, eventually permitted them both to be slain in the same skirmish at Newhaven, in France.

Once more only on his flight to Plymouth the crow slackens over Lamerton, because there the father of Rowe, the poet, was rector. Rowe was a vain, handsome man, who became under-secretary of state to Queen Anne, and his vivacity and gaiety rendered him agreeable to Pope. His Jane Shore was approved by Johnson; his Lady Jane Grey by no one. Mrs. Oldfield, the great actress, pronounced Rowe the best elocutionist she had ever heard. He is said to have been fond of flourishing, at the Cocoa Tree, in St. James's Street, a snuff-box set with diamonds, that some foreign prince had given him.

And now, leaving the region of the tors, the crow strikes straight for Plymouth Sound, where the giant Breakwater spreads its defiant arms like those of a strong swimmer against the waves, and the Eddystone on the distant rock raises its votive beacon.

CHAPTER IX.

PLYMOUTH.

THE black voyager, perched upon the great hollow globe of gun-metal that crowns the Beacon at the east end of the Breakwater, looks towards Plymouth and its lusty children, Stonehouse and Devonport. How different now from the time when Haydon took Wilkie to North Corner Dock to see the pig-tailed foretopmen, lounging along, smoking their long pipes, cracking jokes at every one they met—men, women, or French prisoners, and jostling their way among the crowd of bearded Jews, salesmen, and soldiers! The crow is bewildered at the variety of roofs which offer him halting-places. The Charles the Second bastions invite him; the roof of the Victualling Yard is tempting; the wall of the Dockyard affords good views of the Hamoaze. On the Mount Wise telegraph he could rest for a moment; the rope houses of Devonport, the gun wharf, the building slips, all need the observant bird's attention, were his

flight not so straight and swift to the Land's End. He glances, however, with delighted eye over the Sound from Penlee Point to Drake's Island, from the Mewstone to the entrance of Catwater, from Stoke Point to the highest terrace of trees crowning the woods of Mount Edgecumbe.

In Henry the Second's time Plymouth is described as "a mene thing, an inhabitation of fishers," but was soon rich enough, in its dangerous conspicuousness, to be worth plundering; so down came the French upon it, like eagles on a fat lamb, in 1377, when Hugh Courtenay, Earl of Devon, drove them off and chased them back to their ships. In 1388 the Gauls were at it again, and burnt part of the town; and in 1400 and 1403 they also plundered it. The part they burned, local antiquarians say, is still called Briton (Breton) side; while Old Town Street represents the uninjured district of the quondam fishing village. The slow Saxon nature was at last roused to a sense of danger and the necessity for more security, and in 1439 Henry the Sixth made Plymouth a corporation, and gave it the right to fortify itself. In 1512 the ramparts were still further increased. A gleam of light fell on the town, to which all English eyes turned, when, in 1471, Margaret of Anjou landed here; and in 1501 Catherine of Arragon, with her cold Spanish pride, stepped on shore at Plymouth, on her way to meet her husband. An old house in Catte

Street used to be shown as the one in which Painter, the mayor, welcomed her. Spenser mentions the Hoe as the spot, according to the fabulous British history, where Corineus, the companion of Brute of Troy, fought with Goemot, one of the stoutest of those giant aborigines, tall as lighthouses, who once prevailed here. Two effigies of giants, with clubs in their hands, were cut, ages ago, on the turf of the Hoe, to celebrate this great duel; and the steps were, till recently, pointed out by which Corineus dragged down the lumbering body of his rival and flung it over the cliff into the sea.

The crow remembers that, from the Hoe, keen eyes first saw the great gilded and crimson sails of the Armada towering against the horizon. There is a legend that, some hours before this, Drake was pacing here, in jewelled hat, ruff, cloak, and rapier, with other brave Devonshire captains. He was playing at bowls when news of the proud fleet's approach came, but he would not leave till the game was finished. "Let's play the last bowl," he said, "and then have a bowl at the Spaniards." Could men of such calm courage fail to give the Armada to fire and storm, to hungry reefs and greedy sands? No wonder that on the anniversary of that grand day it was the fashion for Devonshire bells to clash, men to shout, maidens to wear posies, 'prentices to rejoice, and the mayor and corporation of Plymouth to flaunt their

grandeur in scarlet, and to treat their visitors with cake and wine.

Sir Francis Drake appears in Plymouth legends as a magician. It is believed by the country people that, when the Plymouth people wanted water, Sir Francis Drake called for his horse and rode straight to Dartmoor. There, among the granite blocks and the heathery valleys, he searched about for, and found, the clearest and fullest spring of Sheeps Tor. Instantly uttering some words of incantation, Sir Francis galloped back the thirty miles to Plymouth, without pulling bridle, the obedient stream racing after its master close at his horse's heels, and following him into the grateful and rejoicing town. The sober fact is that Sir Francis obtained a prosaic act of parliament from good Queen Bess, and coaxed a score of proud private gentlemen to allow the stream to pass through their lands. When, at last, the water coursed into Plymouth, it was welcomed as if it had been a living sovereign, by the firing of cannon and by mayor and corporation in full pomp.

Plymouth had some hard rubs in 1643, when, after the Cavaliers had taken Exeter, Prince Maurice levied an army of seven thousand stout-hearted western men and joined Colonel John Digby, who, with three thousand Royalist foot and six hundred horse, had already taken Mount Stamford, which was within half a mile of the Sound, and commanded part of the river.

What was Plymouth then? Clarendon tells us it was a rich and populous corporation, and the greatest port in the west, next to Bristol. The castle stood strong towards the sea, with good platforms and ordnance; and a little more than musket-shot from the town rose a fort much stronger than the castle, both commanding the entrance into the harbour, then under command of Sir Jacob Ashley, and a garrison of not more than fifty men. These forts had guns and shot, but no provisions, the king having been afraid of alarming his enemies by making any preparations for war. Sir Jacob Ashley being recalled to the king's side, the mayor, aided by a parliamentary committee, who kept a sharp eye on him, held the castle and town, which was guarded with a small and irregular earthwork; while to Sir Alexander Carew, a Cornish gentleman of fortune, the fort and island were entrusted. And here one of those romantic episodes, so frequent in the Civil war, mingles its intrigues and vicissitudes with the story of Plymouth. Carew, afraid for his Cornish estates, and seeing Cornwall and all Devonshire, but Plymouth, pass over to the king, began to propose secret terms to Sir John Berkley, the governor of Exeter. But Carew, too anxious for a pardon under the king's own hand, delayed so long that he was betrayed by a servant, and the mayor instantly surprised him in his fort, and packed him off, a prisoner, by sea to London.

Clarendon paints very strongly the state of mutual distrust in Plymouth when Digby first sat down before the walls. If Carew, who had been so violent for the Puritan cause, had been false, who could hope to be unsuspected? But the trembling town was saved by the indiscretion of Prince Maurice, who, on taking Exeter, marched to Dartmouth, which he surprised. He had lost the tide in the affairs of men when he returned to Plymouth. The parliament in the meantime had sent five hundred resolute men and a staunch Scotch officer, who meant mischief, a perfect Dalgetty, ready to eat his own boots, and everybody else's, and prepared for rat soup and nettle salad, rather than surrender. The Cavaliers made no way against Plymouth.

In 1644, the king appeared in person before the place, hoping to scare it into a sudden surrender; but the Governor Essex had already put in the town Lord Roberts, a sour dogged man, who never knew when he was beaten. The king, tired of waiting for the surrender, left it to Sir Richard Greenvil, who had sworn a soldier's oath to take the town before Christmas, and who had already quarrelled so deeply with Lord Roberts, that every prisoner on either side was either hanged or put to the sword.

This imperious Sir Richard was a type of too many of the cavalier leaders. A brave daring soldier under the Duke of Buckingham, he had, by that generous

nobleman's aid, obtained the hand of the richest widow in the west, whom he soon drove from her house by license and neglect. He then seized all her estates, and was fined six thousand pounds, for defaming the Earl of Suffolk, upon whom his (Sir Richard's) wife had settled the property. In the Irish war Greenvil had plundered incessantly and showed great cruelty, hanging women who would not discover where their money was concealed. One day, during the siege of Plymouth, meeting six Puritan soldiers carrying wood, he made one of them hang all the rest. Soon after this, Colonel Digby, repulsing a sally of horse and foot from Plymouth, received a thrust in the eye with a rapier, which pierced near his brain, and from which wound he never entirely recovered.

Sir Richard drew off from Plymouh and retired to Ockington, which he barricaded with three regiments of old soldiers to keep the Parliament men from Plymouth, and then proposed, among other crazy schemes, to cut a trench for forty miles from Barnstaple to the sea, by which, like a true Bobadil, he offered to defend Cornwall and Devon from all the world. After that Greenvil's vanity, rapacity, and ambition sent him all wrong; he denounced Goring, and ordered the people to rise *en masse* and beat him out of Cornwall if he dare enter. He refused to act under Lord Hopton, the king's general-in-chief in the west, and was finally committed to prison by the

prince for his oppression, tyranny, and disobedience. A gate, the sole surviving relic of the old Plymouth fortification, was pulled down in 1863.

An old resident in Plymouth has drawn a graphic picture of the town about the year 1809, and the crow, refreshing his memory by this means, looks back and sees again the Plymouth of the past. Old admirals then paced the streets, pig-tailed sailors revelled in the grog-shops, old heroes perambulated the Hoe. It was the time of hard fighting, of press-gangs, of courts-martial, and frequent stringing up at the yard-arm. Old Haydon, the shrewd, clever father of the artist, was a printer and bookseller then, in a large shop nearly opposite the end of Market-street, facing the awkward Guildhall. Haydon used to relate to favourite customers how, when a boy of seventeen, he had heard an old seaman describe the horrors of the storm of 1703. The man had seen Winstanley, when the sea was breaking over Drake's Island like a cascade, put off from the Barbican steps to the Eddystone lighthouse, of which he was the builder—but neither builder, nor the slightest fragment of the Pharos, was ever seen again after that night. Newsmongers and quidnuncs of all ranks frequented Haydon's shop. Old Captain Winne used often to drop in, telescope under his arm, on his way to the Hoe or the Citadel. Winne had been with Lord Howe on the first of June, and used to relate exult-

ingly how, when our line was complete, the admiral shouted, "Then up with the helm, in the name of God!" and dashed through the Frenchmen, felling seventy of the enemy in the "Montagne" alone with his first sweeping broadside. The Duke of Clarence, when stationed at Plymouth, fell in love with the fair sister of this Captain Winne. Then there was old Admiral Manly, who is said once, in a fog, to have kept up a long and steady fire at a cloud that he mistook for a French ship. In Haydon's shop these veterans often met Admiral Vincent, a captain of 1747, who wrote a book on the non-existence of matter when he was between eighty and ninety years old; and brave one-armed Sir Michael Seymour, of the "Amethyst." That huge man, General England, the lieutenant-governor, also sometimes dropped in. The Duke of York, by some supposed to be his brother, had christened him "Great Britain." Another habitué was Herbert, the banker, a thin old man, whom the townspeople had christened "Death," from the following story. Two tipsy sailors blundered one night into the banker's garden, in Frankfort-place; the shutters not being closed, one of them looked in at the window, and saw the pale, gaunt old man nodding alone over his parlour fire. He instantly called to his lingering messmate:

"Jack, Jack, heave a-head; if you never saw old Death before, here he is."

And a fine Holbein picture of senile decay the story gives us.

Mr. Cyrus Redding remembers once, in this same war time, yachting near the French coast, knowing old "Billy Blue" (Admiral Cornwallis) was between him and Brest, with twenty or thirty line-of-battle ships. Presently he saw hull down the mast of a large vessel; then soon after rose up two vessels, one towing the other. The "Thetis," of forty-four guns, had been captured by Sir Michael Seymour's vessel, the "Amethyst," of thirty-six. It had been a butchering fight of an hour and a half. The "Thetis" had lost one hundred and thirty-five killed and one hundred and two wounded, out of a crew of three hundred seamen and one hundred soldiers; the "Amethyst" about seventy killed or wounded out of two hundred and twenty or two hundred and thirty. The old resident went on board, and saw the shambles still uncleared; the bulwarks were jagged with shot; the shot thrown by us into the Frenchman's hull had in several places had knocked two ports into one. Ghastly wounded men lay on blood-soaked hammocks and coils of rope, moaning and shrieking; the red deck was strewn with dying wretches, cut rigging, and severed limbs. The cock-pit was choked with wounded sailors, and on one plank thirteen miserable wretches were dying with lock jaw.

"We can do nothing for them," the surgeon said,

with looks of pity. The guns were splashed with blood, the steps of the gangways dripped with gore, the planks were sodden and black with powder.

On another occasion the old resident visited the "Northumberland," that had just driven on shore two French frigates and a brig, and had had a brush with the Brest batteries. One French gun had killed six or eight of our men and wounded twenty-six. One shot beat out the brains of a seaman, killed a second man, and then passed nearly through the opposite side of the "Northumberland." The ball was cut out, and hung in a netting in the ward-room, as a shot that had done its duty. Among the "Northumberland's" officers on this occasion was Stuart, who was afterwards master of the Susan when she was wrecked in Mount's Bay. A mounted methodist preacher rode into the waves there and saved two men, but on the third attempt was swept away.

Another character of old Plymouth is remembered by the old resident. This was Captain Rotheram, one of the Smollet school of sailors; the brave old tar who commanded the Royal Sovereign at Trafalgar, and would insist on wearing his enormous cocked-hat all through the battle, though it made him as conspicuous as the fatal diamond star did poor Nelson. Rotherham was a tall, wiry, mahogany-coloured veteran, who wore his cocked hat square, and always carried a quid in his cheek.

There were Plymouth captains in those days, stiff-backed martinets, who considered Nelson by no means a crack sailor. His ship was too slovenly for them; he did not flog enough. The story of the "Barfleur" is one of the old Plymouth traditions, and recalls bitter times, when Tartar captains tortured their men almost to madness by small oppressions. A new captain appointed to the "Barfleur" so tormented his crew that they signed a round robin, and sent it to the Admiralty, who instantly forwarded it to the commander-in-chief at the port. The Tartar, holding the round robin in his hand, mustered the men.

"What have you got to say against me?" he said. "What complaint have you? Come, I command you to tell me."

Several of the men replied, "Nothing, sir;" but one honest fellow stood out and said,

"If you want me to tell the truth, sir, I was once punished wrongfully under your orders—I was innocent of the charge."

The captain shouted at once, "Put that fellow in irons!"

Four other sailors, indignant at this, stood out, and declared that they also had been unjustly punished. Two more were then put in irons, and a court-martial was appointed.

When the day came the irons were taken off the

men, and officers and guards being appointed, proceeded the shortest way to the flag-ship. The sea was high, and the boat upset at "the bridge," as it was called, a line of sunken rocks connecting Drake's Island with the mainland. A few men of the boat's crew were saved, but only one prisoner. The president of the court-martial wished to postpone the trial, but the solitary prisoner claimed immediate justice, and was acquitted. The captain, savage as a wounded tiger, resolved to have his revenge. More brutal than ever, he now became thirsty for cruelty. He flogged a whole watch because they did not secure the sails within an impossible time. At last, at Lisbon, a man, more passionate than the rest, stabbed the wretch; but the point of the knife turned on a rib, the captain escaped, and the sailor was hanged. With his dying breath the man declared that he had willingly devoted himself to death, for the sake of his messmates. The captain died soon afterwards of apoplexy.

The "Africane" was another unhappy ship. A mutinous spirit had broken out, and the men threatened to rise if Corbet, an arbitrary man they dreaded, was appointed. The port-admiral had determined, if a mutiny actually broke out, to lay a frigate on each side of the "Africaine" and instantly sink her. This same Captain Corbet, who was afterwards killed off the Isle of France, once said at the admiral's table that the service would never be worth anything till

captains could flog everyone in the ship, even to the lieutenants.

"When that time comes," said good-natured Sir Edward Buller, "admirals will flog captains, and I'll give you your full share if ever you come under my hands."

Admiral Young, the port-admiral then, was a cold, formal, erect man, thin, grave, one hand always on the handle of his sword, the other hanging stiffly by his side. His costume was always the same—white kerseymere breeches, black top boots reaching to his knees, and squared hat. He was succeeded by Sir Robert Calder, a bluff, good-humoured, stout man, who used to boast that when nearly sixty years of age he had dived under a fifty-gun ship. His neglect in destroying the French after Trafalgar was attributed to his Scotch cautiousness. He had attacked twenty-seven Frenchmen with fifteen English vessels, and captured two, but he did not follow up the victory, because twelve or thirteen sail of the line were momentarily expected out of Corunna to join the enemy.

In 1809 the military hospital was full of the wreck of Sir John Moore's army, from Corunna. The soldiers, mere helpless skeletons, were to be seen supported to the hospital by the kind and hearty sailors. Most of the badly wounded had been left behind. When the French field-pieces began to fire on our

transports, they cut their cables and began to run, till our vessels reassured them by some sweeping broadsides at the French, who instantly fled.

The same year the survivors of the miserable Walcheren expedition arrived, to share the same hospital. Eleven thousand men had fallen ill out of a fine army of thirty thousand. Many fell sick even after leaving the Scheldt. Gaunt spectres of soldiers tottered between the rows of beds; others, still weaker, lounged on their pallets, attenuated, pale, and hovering between life and death. The medical staff had never even heard of the local fever, and had not taken with them either bark or wine. Seven thousand brave men perished owing to this blunder.

There were at this time more than seven thousand miserable French prisoners in the depôts of Plymouth garrison. They were allowed to work (poor pining wretches) at Dartmoor, and sell the produce of their labour. Many who had no trade spent their time in gambling, and played away the very clothes off their backs. A set of these fellows, who were almost naked, were called "the Romans." They had gambled away even their bedding, and slept on the prison floor, huddled together for warmth. The story was that they used to turn sides at night, at the word of command—"Turn one, turn all." There is a Plymouth tradition of the war time, how two Frenchmen, escaping from the 'San Rafael,' swam to a lighter full of powder,

overpowered the man on board, ran down through all the ships in Hamoaze, round Drake's Island, and so across the Channel, and sold the powder in France for some hundreds of pounds. The old resident remembers, too, how a prisoner on board the "San Rafael" imitated a two-pound note with Indian ink, and was sent to Exeter and tried for forgery. The defence was that he was under the protection of no laws, and had therefore not broken any. He was acquitted.

The press-gangs were the great disgrace and terror of Plymouth in the war times. Our seamen were hunted down like wild beasts, without a chance of redress. Husbands, fathers, brothers, and lovers were torn suddenly from those dear to them, and hurried away, often through the agency of secret enemies, into slavery. Was it any wonder such unwilling recruits became mutinous, and that captains had at last to trust for half their force to thieves, beggars, and the sweepings of cities? The old resident mentions an infamous case of a young carpenter who, during his dinner hour, strolling on the Barbican Pier, was seized by the crew of a man-of-war and carried off to the port-admiral's ship. The mayor, not having backed the press warrant, declared the proceeding unlawful. A town-serjeant was sent to the ship, but was told no such man was on board. A marine, however, letting out the secret, the mayor persisted, sent the proper officers, and took the man away. It was

a common evasion of the port-admiral's men to put their prisoner, ironed, into the boat alongside, and then to say there was no such person in the ship.

Haydon, the painter, mentions once seeing the greatest of all the celebrities of Plymouth streets in the old times; a little invalid man, with a green shade over his eye, and wearing a shabby well-worn cocked hat and a buttoned-up undress coat. Haydon, quite a child, called out to his companion, "That's Nelson —take off your hat." Nelson, who was leaning on the arm of his chaplain, a taller man in a black coat and round hat, touched his hat to the boy, and smiled.

It was at Plymouth that good Dr. Trotter, backed by the influence of Lord Howe, succeeded, by regulations as to diet, and the use of lime-juice and fresh vegetables, in stopping the ravages of scurvy. "Ruptured in clambering up the sides of vessels," says the old resident, "his own health ruined, he was allowed to retire, after his inestimable services, on a paltry one hundred and eighty pounds per annum."

Two more traditions of Plymouth, and the crow starts again on his aerial tour. It is still remembered how the "Captain," a seventy-four gun ship, that had borne Nelson's flag, caught fire in Hamoaze. As it was impossible to approach near enough to scuttle the hull, and it was feared that the ship would get loose and set others on fire, the launches came and fired heavy artillery into the blazing mass.

At that time sailors, on shore after a long cruise, used to indulge in the wildest follies. One mad fellow once hired twenty-four hackney coaches, and drove out with them in a long procession after him. Admiral Penrose, once meeting one of his sailors quite drunk and waving two twenty-pound notes, seized one of the notes and put it in his pocket. In two days the man came on board drunk and penniless. When he was sober, the captain returned him the money.

"Ay, ay, your honour," he said, "I thought I'd money enough for a couple of days longer, but I couldn't tell what had become of it."

Northcote, the painter, was one of Plymouth's celebrities, and Haydon sketches him as a small, spiteful wizen, bald-headed man, with little shining eyes, and speaking broad Devonshire.

"Heestoricaul painter?" he said to the young enthusiast. "Why, ye'll starve with a bundle of straw under yeer head."

The late Sir Charles Eastlake was a Plymouth man, and son of the Solicitor to the Admiralty. Turner was fond of the neighbourhood of Plymouth. Mr. Cyrus Redding describes him at a pic-nic on Bur Island, watching the long, dark Bolt-head on a rough day. His "Crossing the Brook" was taken from near New Bridge, on the Tamar. He said he had never seen so many natural beauties crowded into so small a

compass. The inhabitants of Plymouth loaded him with attentions. Prout, too, was another Plymouth man, and so was the poet Carrington, whose name has been fitly graven on a granite altar at Dartmoor.

The crow, leaving the town, sails away seaward to the Eddystone, where, after Winstanley had perished, and Rudyard's lighthouse had been burnt, that sturdy Yorkshireman Smeaton raised the present unshakable structure. Following that great and sure guide, nature, he took the trunk of the oak as his model of fixed and stubborn strength, and the granite case of the building he dovetailed and grafted into the solid rock of the gneiss reef. Mr. Smiles describes very admirably how, after a rough and dangerous night, Smeaton used to ascend the Hoe, and look anxiously south-west over the wild waters for his lighthouse.

"Sometimes in the dim grey of the morning he had to wait long, until he could see a tall white pillar of spray shoot up into the air. Thank God, it was still safe. Then as the light grew he could discern his building, temporary house and all, standing firm amid the waters, and, thus far satisfied, he could proceed to his workshops, his mind relieved for the day."

The Plymouth Breakwater, which the crow chose as his point of vantage, has a story of its own, illustrating the energy and perseverance of the engineers

of the present century. Earl St. Vincent proposed it, and Mr. Rennie, in 1806, was first to survey the Sound, and suggest a mole erected across the Panther, Tinker, Shovel, and St. Carlos reefs. He expected that it would require two million tons of stone for the mole's three arms, and an expenditure of about one million fifty-five thousand two hundred pounds. Various other plans were proposed, more or less impossible, more or less absurd. One hundred and forty wooden towers full of stones were to be sunk in a double line; there was to be an open-arched mole, like that at Tyre; there were to be one hundred and seventeen triangular floating frames and piers at different points. Mr. Rennie at last received his order, and set to work in 1811. Twenty five acres of Creston limestone were purchased, and ten vessels and forty-five sloops prepared to bring the stone. The first stone was laid in 1812; by March of the next year forty-three thousand seven hundred and eighty-nine tons of stone had been deposited. In March, 1814, the structure bravely resisted a storm, and saved a French vessel under its lee. In 1816 three hundred and thirty-two thousand four hundred and seven tons more of stone were deposited. In 1817, a storm displaced two hundred yards of the upper stone-work; but this only strengthened the work, and showed the "angle of repose" at which the stones could most safely lie. Rennie died in 1821, and his son and three

other engineers completed this noble work. Sir John Rennie, finding the roll of the sea dangerous at the westward end of the Breakwater, built a platform of rubble to "trip up" the heavy seas before they could reach the slope. In 1838 a severe storm carried blocks of twelve and fourteen tons from the sea to the land slope. The western arm was completed in 1840. The stone used has been computed, in the total, at three million tons; the total cost at one million five hundred thousand pounds. The Digue, at Cherbourg, is, however, four thousand one hundred and eleven feet long and ninety feet broad; the Breakwater at Plymouth only one thousand seven hundred and sixty feet long and one hundred and twenty feet broad at the base.

And now rising and soaring far over the proud woods of Mount Edgecumbe, which the admiral of the Armada is said to have selected for his special prize when the Spaniards should divide England, the crow drifts on across the wild Cornish moors to Bodmin, *en route* for the Cornish coast and the haunted cliffs around Tintagel.

CHAPTER X.

PLYMOUTH TO BODMIN.

THE broad thoroughfare of the sky not being much impeded by traffic westward, the crow makes a straight swift flight of it from Plymouth to Liskeard —"the palace on a hill," as the Celts called it.

This small town, embedded among the rocky downs of Caradon and the Bodmin moors, was the centre of much hard fighting in the Civil wars, when the gay Cavaliers of Cornwall met the stony-faced Puritans of Plymouth on Bradoc Downs, between Liskeard and Lostwithiel. Sir Ralph Hopton—"the soldiers' darling," whom Clarendon afterwards described as "the only man never spoken ill of in the Prince's council"—was in the field, with Sir John Berkley as commissary-general, and Colonel Ashburnham as major-general of foot. All Cornwall was theirs, from that grim, ship-shattering rock the Shark's Fin to the very earthworks of Saltash, on whose terraces the Puritan sentinels paced, looking gloomily

westward for the first sword-flash of the enemy. The Parliament resolved to stamp this wild fire out before the western prairie caught. Rapidly, like clouds rolling together for a storm, grim forces gathered from subjugated Dorset, Somerset, and Devon, and moved westward like a rising deluge. Ruthen, the Scotch governor of Plymouth, soon led the Parliament forces over the Tamar, to charge the king's men, who were sounding their bugles and beating their drums at Bodmin. Sir Ralph, gallant with lace and feather, wishing to show the psalm-singers that Royalist gentlemen could fear God as well as honour the king, had public prayers read by the army chaplains at the head of every squadron. The Puritans from the high ground muttered that "the Cavalier babe-eaters were at mass." Sir Ralph, "winging his foot with horse and dragoons," advanced, full of fight, within musket shot of the enemy, and, seeing the Puritan cannon had not yet come up from Liskeard, pushed forward two iron minion drakes, very light guns, under cover of small parties of horse. The first two shots striking full among the Puritan pikemen, and coming from they knew not what hidden batteries, to which their tardy guns could not reply, struck a panic into Ruthen's men; they began to fall back, and, seeing that, the Cavaliers bore hotly forward, pikes down, and drove the Roundheads back towards Liskeard. The Cornish men, famous at hedge skirmishing, soon worri-

ed out the enemy's musketeers from behind the loose stone walls and hedges, where they had been thrown back in reserve to protect Ruthen's retreat. Soon the fierce and alert attack of the Cornish men broke the Roundhead ranks, their pikes wavered and scattered, their colours drooped, their fire relaxed, and they fled towards Devonshire, leaving twelve hundred and fifty sullen men prisoners, and nearly all their flags. The tardy Puritan cannon, too slow to climb the ascent, were also taken—four brass guns (two of them twelve-pounders), one iron saker, shot and powder in quantities, besides heaps of pikes, swords, muskets, pistols, and carbines. Ruthen fled to Saltash, whence he was soon driven, with the loss of eighty men and all his colours. After this battle Hopton rested at Liskeard, established quarters there, and celebrated a solemn thanksgiving. Charles the First also came there twice: once in 1644, and once in 1645. In 1620 Liskeard was represented by Sir Edward Coke, who is always chained to Littleton in legal memories. In 1775 Edward Gibbon, the historian, was returned for Liskeard, and the next year produced the first volume of his great work, the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. Two learned men Liskeard boasts of having educated at its grammar-school—two learned but two very different men—Dr. Wolcott and Dean Prideaux.

Dr. Wolcott, the son of a Devonshire doctor, first

apprenticed to a Cornish apothecary, then a clergyman in Jamaica, practised medicine at Truro and Exeter, and lastly became satirist and tormentor of old King George in London. He nobly threw up the pension with which Government silenced him, when he found he had to write for the adminstration he despised. Wolcott was buried at St. Paul's, Covent Garden, his coffin, at his special request, being placed touching that of Butler—Hudibras-Butler.

Prideaux was a Padstow man; his comprehensive work, The Connexion between the Old and New Testament, is not yet entirely obsolete. He was a learned and virtuous man, who would have been made a bishop, but, suffering from chronic illness, resigned the duty which he could not perform, and made his library his home.

The crow has not far to fly from Liskeard to St. Keyne's Well, on the road to West Looe. This saint, unappreciated (except through Southey) out of her own parish, was the daughter of Braganus, a Brecknockshire prince, and she came to Cornwall on a pilgrimage to St. Michael's Mount with her nephew St. Cadoc, following her to persuade her to return. Being thirsty as they got near Liskeard, St. Cadoc struck his enchanted staff in the earth, and there instantly gushed out a pure limpid spring, which still flows in that green lane near St. Keyne's church. The well is walled in, and from the earth over it grow five trees,

an oak, a noble elm, and three ashes—which were planted about 1742, by one of the Rashleighs. St. Keyne endowed the water of the spring with this miraculous property—whichever could first drink of it, after marriage, whether husband or wife, became henceforth the master. Southey, partly following Carew's earlier lines, wrote a pleasant ballad on the subject. The closing verse is full of very quiet humour:

> "I hastened as soon as the wedding was o'er
> And left my good wife in the porch;
> But i' faith she had been wiser than I,
> For she took a bottle to church."

Local historians tell the story differently. There were two sisters, they say, daughters of a Liskeard farmer, who were married at an interval of several years apart. The first, Jane, a gentle girl, refused her sister's help to outwit her bridegroom, and she and her lover good-naturedly agreed that neither should visit the dangerous well. Mary, the older and more stubborn girl, promised the widower who married her not to run off to the well the moment the last "Amen" was uttered, as he said it would make him appear so foolish to the neighbours; but just before the dinner on the wedding day, the bride called the man apart, and said, "Dear Robert, now we are alone I may drink;" then, pulling out a bottle, she tossed off the magic water.

Close to Liskeard is St. Neot's, and the crow stays

a moment to look in at the church window and record another legend of an eccentric Cornish saint. St. Neot was, according to some historians, the uncle of King Alfred; according to others, a poor shepherd, whose first successful miracle was the impounding in a ring of stones, still shown on Gonzion Down, and uncommonly resembling an old fort, a flock of contumacious crows that had made forays upon his wheat field. Following up this first success, St. Neot went to Rome, returned, became a hermit, and eventually getting tired of solitude, founded a monastery, to make other people suffer what he had already suffered himself. In a well near the monastery, his guardian angel placed two fish, which were never to diminish as long as the saint took out only one daily for his frugal dinner. The saint, however, soon grew ill, and, growing dainty and tetchy in his appetite, his servant Barius, in his over zeal to tempt his master to eat, one day scooped up both the fish, and nolens volens, boiled one and fried the other. The saint, aghast at the sin of Barius, instantly fell on his knees to appease heaven till the cooked fish could be thrown back into the spring. The servant was forgiven; the moment the fish touched the water it began to sport and leap, and the saint falling to at his permitted meal, was instantly restored to health. At another time St. Neot was praying near the well, in which he used daily to chant the whole Psalter, with

the water up to his chin, when a hunted deer came and cowered by his side for protection; the dogs on their arrival, reproved by the saint, crouched at his feet, and the astonished huntsman, on seeing these miracles, renounced the world, and hung his bugle horn up in the cloister as a votive offering. On another occasion some wild deer came of their own accord from the forest to replace some oxen which had been stolen from the saint. The wicked thieves, seeing St. Neot ploughing with the deer, were so conscience-stricken, that they at once returned the cattle. There is also no doubt that St. Neot built this church mysteriously by night, and that magical teams of two deer and one hare drew all the stone used in its building. St. Neot was a little man, and they say that he had two ways of opening the church door—one by throwing up the key into the keyhole, another by bidding the lock descend to him.

A few miles from Liskeard, in another direction, is Menheniot, where Bishop Trelawny was christened. This was one of the seven bishops whom James the Second was unwise enough to commit to the Tower for refusing to sanction the dangerous Act of Indulgence, which, under pretext of tolerating Dissenters, was to open the flood-gates of Rome upon our English Protestantism. It was this sturdy Sir Jonathan, who, when the bishops took their petition to Whitehall, and the angry king exclaimed, "I tell

you this is a standard of rebellion!" fell on his knees and said:

"Rebellion! for God's sake, sir, do not say so hard a thing of us! A Trelawny can be no rebel. Remember how my family has fought for the crown. Remember how I served your majesty when Monmouth was in the West."

And good Bishop Ken, worthy Izaak Walton's relation, and the writer of our noble Evening Hymn, then said:

"We have two duties to perform—our duty to God, and our duty to Your Majesty. We honour you, but we fear God."

The king's face grew dark as he replied:

"Have I deserved this?—I who have been such a friend to your church? *I will be obeyed.* You are trumpeters of sedition. What do you do here? Go to your dioceses, and see that I am obeyed."

Then to himself he muttered:

"I will go on. I have been too indulgent. Indulgence ruined my father."

So the bigoted fool went on, and went on, and never stopped till he got all the way to St. Germains.

That one heroic act made Trelawny a demi-god for ever in Cornwall. The miners came swarming up from underground, singing the grand defiant ballad, still preserved, and so charmingly re-written by

Mr. Hawker of Morwenstow:

> "And shall Trelawny die?
> Here's twenty thousand Cornish men
> Will know the reason why."

Sir Jonathan's pastoral staff is still preserved as a valued relic at Pelynt Church near East Looe. It is of gilt wood; lightning fell on it some years ago, but, impotent as James's anger, it only fused the copper ornaments that adorned the badge.

North of Liskeard, the crow's black wings fold upon that strong toppling column of granite blocks—the Cheesewring (cheese press)—a rock idol, says old credulous Borlase, who indeed believed anything and everything.

Near the Cheesewring there is a cave at the foot of a hill, dangerously close to some ruthless granite quarries; here a strange hermit of the later times took up his abode in 1735 (George the Second), to study and to meditate. "The Mountain Philosopher," as he was called, was one Daniel Gumb, a poor stone-cutter of Lezant, who, as a mere boy, manifested a passion for mathematics and astronomy, and being very poor, resolved to reduce his expenses, so that he might work less and study more. Finding a huge sloping slab of granite near the Cheesewring, Gumb dug a cavern underneath it, built up the walls with cement, and scooped out a chimney.

There this true philosopher lived with his wife and

children, rent and tax free. He never left the moor even to visit the neighbouring villages. After his death, when the roof of the cavern fell in, his bedroom and a stone carved with a geometric figure (47 prop. book ii. Euclid) were shown to visitors. The traveller used to be pointed out the rock where Gumb sat to watch his only friends the stars. The quarrymen will cart off that too, and then only the name will remain. It is strange that a genius so strongly directed should have left no discoveries, and existed only to waste itself in useless reverie.

Not far from the Cheesewring and the Hurlers (ball-players turned into stone for hurling on a Sunday), and near St. Cleer's Church, stands that curious fragment of half-lost British history, the Other Half Stone, a Runic cross, to the memory of Dungarth, a son of Caradoc, King of Cornwall, who was drowned A.D. 872. The well of St. Cleer was once, it is said, used as a ducking pool for the cure of mad people: a miserably barbarous custom.

Bodmin (the monk's town) a crow of Cornish ancestry can hardly pass. It is a long street running between hills, it was once, antiquaries say, the site of a Temple of Apollo, built by a British king, 830 B.C., really, however, the home of St. Guron, a Cornish anchorite, also of St. Petrock, a great man here, and afterwards of the site of a Benedictine monastery built and favoured by King Athelstan.

In 1496 that impudent impostor Perkin Warbeck, who pretended to be one of the princes escaped from the Tower, and called himself "Richard the Fourth," mustered his adherents at Bodmin preparatory to marching on Exeter, and proclaiming war on Henry the Seventh.

In 1550 (Edward the Sixth) Bodmin effervesced again. The Cornish people were discontented with the Protector. Wiltshire was up, Oxford and Gloucestershire were taking down their bows and bills, Norfolk was on fire, Ket the tanner was holding his court under Mousehold Oak; Hampshire, Sussex, and Kent were buzzing angrily. The rebels of Bodmin compelled Boyer, the frightened mayor, to furnish them with supplies.

After the crushing defeat near Exeter, Lord Russell sent Sir Anthony Kingston, the king's provost-marshal general, to look up Bodmin, and purge it with fire and steel. Sir Anthony had hanged the portreeve of St. Ives in the middle of the town. He also had put to death Mr. Mayow of St. Columb, upon a charge not capital, nor even proved. Mr. Mayow's wife, hearing that her husband was arrested, prepared to set out to intercede for him; but she stayed so long before the glass, rendering herself irresistible, that before she reached the terrible provost, Mr. Mayow was dangling from a sign-post. Boyer, the worthy mayor of Bodmin, was delighted at the arrival of law and

order—still more pleased when he received a letter from the great man naming a day on which he would dine with him in state. There was a great din and clatter of preparation at Master Boyer's, much silver cleaning, and a tapping of many portly casks. A little before dinner, Kingston took his host aside and whispered that one of the townspeople was shortly to be executed, and that a gallows must be got ready; business was business, and must be attended to. The mayor gave the word, the carpenters fell to, and soon got up the gibbet, strong, serviceable, and close to the mayor's door. The dinner over and several toasts proposed, Sir Anthony put down his glass, and abruptly asked if the gallows was finished. He had previously appeared slightly preoccupied, and had indeed even been good-humouredly bantered by the mayor. The answer came that it was ready.

"I pray you," said the provost, taking the mayor's arm, "bring me to the place, and let us see the dog hang."

"Is it strong enough?" quoth Kingston, critically.

"Yea," said the mayor, pushing the central post without, "doubtless it is."

The provost's halberdiers closed sternly round, as if eager to hear the conversation.

"Well, then, Master Boyer," said the provost,

grimly smiling, "get thee up speedily, for it is prepared for you."

"I hope," answered the miserable mayor, trembling, "you mean not as you speak."

"I' faith," said the provost angrily, "there is no remedy, sirrah, for thou hast been a busy rebel."

So they hanged the mayor at his own door.

At Halgaver, or the Goat's Moor, one mile south of Bodmin, there used to be held in every July a sort of carnival, probably as old as the Saxons, whose clumsy fun it resembles. A lord of misrule was always appointed, to try all unpopular persons for slovenly or extravagant dress, bad manners, or gluttony. The offender was arraigned with great solemnity, and with all sorts of pompous and ludicrous travesties of legal repetitions, evasions, and quibbles. The punishment was being thrown into mud, or water, or both. The old Cornish proverbs of "Take him before the Mayor of Halgaver," "Present him in Halgaver Court," are still extant, and are often hurled at Cornish slovens, boors, and bears.

CHAPTER XI.

BODMIN TO PADSTOW.

AND now the crow, turning away from civilisation, strikes across the stormy Bodmin moors, where the ghost of the Cornish wizard Tregeagle bides his doom, expiates his crime, and is tormented by the relentless master whom he served so well. His favourite haunt is a small Dead Sea, called Dozmare Pool, a little tarn, eight hundred and ninety feet above the sea, and not far from Brown Willie and the old tin workings on the Fowey. Wicked Tregeagle was a dishonest steward of Lord Robartes, at Landhydrock, where a room in the house is still called Tregeagle's. This Sir Giles Overreach of the Carolan times cheated the tenants, destroyed papers, forged deeds, and sold land not his own. He amassed money enough to purchase the estate of Trevorder, in St. Breock. Certain it is, he murdered a sister, an angel who stood between him and his prey, and his miserable wife and children also fell victims to his pitiless cruelty. When

death came to strike the monster, who trembled at his approach, Tregeagle heaped gold on the priests to sing, and pray, and save him from his certain doom. Their exorcisms succeeded; he died, and they laid him at rest in St. Breock church. But the devil was still watching—a law-suit arose at Bodmin about some lands, the title deeds of which Tregeagle had destroyed.

The case was argued over and over; trial after trial, and yet no result. At last even lawyers' expedients were exhausted. A final decision was to be given. Everything turned on the validity of a certain deed. The counsel for the defence was in despair. The judge was about to sum up. The court was hushed, when the minister of St. Breward entered, leading the corpse of Tregeagle. There was a shudder of horror when counsel, pale, but still brazen, commenced an exhaustive cross-examination of the unjust steward. The result however proved a system of complicated fraud, of which the honest defendant had been the victim, and the trembling jury gave a unanimous and speedy verdict in his favour.

Now came the difficulty about laying the ghost of the dreadful witness. He kept following the defendant everywhere, and rendering his newly-gained property a burden to him. The lawyers and priest at last united their cunning, and devised a plan. They would set Tregeagle a purgatorial task, during which he

might slowly repent, and during the performance of which he was safe from the Devil's claws. He should drain Dozmare, a tidal and bottomless pool. Drain it moreover, proposed a sly curate, by means of a limpet shell with a hole in it. Tregeagle worked hard in that desolate place, and on stormy winter nights was heard howling at the hopelessness of his eternal task. The storms and lightnings tried to drive him from his labour, and then, if he rested for a moment, he was chased by the Devil and all his hounds, to the Roche Rocks, where he obtained respite by ramming his head through the east window of St. Michael's chapel, where hermit lepers once dwelt.

For some reason not quite decided, Tregeagle got tired of Dozmare Pool, and was then sent to the north coast, near Padstow, to make trusses and ropes of sand. The moment he had packed and twisted them, the breakers came and rolled them level. Daughters of the Danaides! it was positively unbearable. The inhabitants of Padstow, maddened by his howlings, sent for St. Petrock to remove the monster to anywhere on the southern coast, out of hearing.

St. Petrock deposited his encumbrance on Bareppa, and sentenced him to carry sacks of sand across the estuary of the Looe, and to empty them at Porthleven, till the beach was entirely cleared as far as the rocks. Artful St. Petrock had observed that the sweep of the tide was from Trewavas Head towards the Lizard,

and that every day's wave would roll back the sand. Long did poor Tregeagle labour, but all in vain; and at last his loud howlings began to seriously disturb the fishermen of Porthleven. A mischievous goblin at last brought them relief. One night when the giant, laden with an enormous sack of sand, was wading across the mouth of the estuary, the goblin, out of pure malice, tripped up Tregeagle. The sea was lashed by a storm at the time, and, as the steward fell, the contents of his sack were poured out across the arm of the sea, and formed a bar which at once destroyed the commerce of Helston (Ellas' town).

Anger and weapons were useless; so, by bell, book, and candle, the priest again put chains on the wayward and tormented spirit, and transported him to the Land's End. His task this time was more tremendous than ever. He was condemned to sweep all the sands from Porthcurnow Cove round the great granite headland of Tol-Peden Penwith into Nankisal Cove. There is one thing against him, and that is the strong sweep of the Gulf Stream; but he perseveres. Those sighing sounds, heard before the sou'-west gales, are said to be his moanings, when he knows the tempest is coming, to scatter the sand he has with such cruel toil collected.

Another version of the great Cornish legend, an amalgam of many centuries of myths, represents Tregeagle, when exorcised by the priest's magic circle,

changing into a black bull, at first furious at the prayers, but gradually growing quiet as a lamb. He was at last sent to Genvor Cove, and sentenced to make trusses of sand and carry them up to Escol's Cliff. Many winters Tregeagle toiled at this unsatisfactory business, till he suddenly thought of bringing water from an adjacent stream and freezing the sand. This he did, and finishing his job, went back to the defendant in the Bodmin trial, and would have torn him in pieces had he not had a child in his arms. But over innocent children spirits have no power. The impracticable Tregeagle was then sentenced to the same task, minus all fresh water. In one legend Tregeagle is made lord of a castle which stood by Dozmare Pool, the Bodmin moors being his hunting forests. Enchantment has removed the castle, and turned the oak trees into granite blocks. Near St. Roche there is a granite pillar twelve feet high, which is called Tregeagle's staff. Tregeagle, one night crossing the Daporth hills, lost his hat, and running to get it, flung away his staff to lighten him in his search. The hat, a great disk of granite, remained on a neighbouring hill till 1798, when some soldiers camping there, fancying it to be the cause of the constant rain that tormented them, hurled it down into the sea.

And now the crow will take a bold flight seaward, far from the ceaseless mists that float over the Bodmin moors and the vaporous rains that beat on the

Four-hole Cross and the desert heath of Temple Moor, into King Arthur's country. At Tintagel-by-the-Sea he was born, and at Slaughter-Bridge, close by, he fell with all his knights beside him. This Arthur, who owes everything to Alfred—not King Alfred, but Alfred Tennyson—is divisible into two parts: the fabulous Arthur and the semi-fabulous Arthur of semi-fabulous history. He was probably really a British chief of the sixth century. He is said to have defeated the Saxons in twelve battles, at last to have been wounded to death in a battle at Camelford, and then to have been conveyed by sea to Glastonbury, where he died and was buried. In the romances he is made to conquer Scotland, Ireland, Iceland, Norway, and Gaul. Geoffry of Monmouth tells the story of Arthur from Armorican sources, and a romance about him was one of the earliest books printed by Caxton. Leland says that near Camelford, where Arthur's last battle was fought, pieces of armour, rings, and brass furniture for horses, were still sometimes dug up at Slaughter Bridge, where ages ago

> "All day long the noise of battle roll'd
> Among the mountains by the winter sea,
> Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
> Had fallen in Lyonness (?) about their lord."

Across the stream of the Camel, in a valley near Boscastle, not far from the sea, there is a bridge of flat stones upon uprights. The tradition is that this stream ran crimson on the fatal day when Arthur

slew Mordred, his traitorous nephew, at this spot, having previously, in front of where Worthyvale House now stands, received a wound from Mordred's poisoned sword. An engraved stone over the stream is said to still mark the exact spot. The Cornish tradition is that Arthur was transformed into a red-legged chough, and it is therefore still thought unlucky to kill one of these birds.

There is a tradition that the Danes once landed at Genvor Cove, Alarm fires instantly spread from Carn Brea to St. Agnes beacon, from the Great Stone to Cadbarrow, and from Cadbarrow to Brown Willie. King Arthur, then at Tintagel, feasting with nine other kings, instantly marched to the Land's End, and smote the red-haired Danes so terribly, that only those escaped who had charge of the ships. The mill of Vellan Druchar was that day worked with blood. The ships, too, were cast on shore, and left so high among the rocks by an extraordinary spring tide, that for years the birds built in the rigging. After the battle, at which Merlin was present, Arthur and his nine kings pledged each other in holy water from St. Sennan's well. They returned thanks for their victory in holy water from St. Sennan's chapel, and finally dined together on the Table Rock. The old name for the Land's End was the Headland of Blood, and Bollait, a place near, was the Field of Slaughter.

Tintagel, Arthur's old palace by the sea, is certainly one of the most romantic spots in England. It stands on a desolate precipice of grey slate rock, which seems rent by an earthquake into two parts, the sea having undermined it. Half the ruin stands on the mainland and half on the isolated rock, where the citadel and chapel are. Many of the walls have fallen, those that remain are shattered and ruinous. Leland describes it as having been "a marvellous strong and noble fortress," almost impregnable, and on a high and terrible crag, with a drawbridge crossing the chasm.

The old landing place Porthleven, the "Iron Gate" at the foot of the promontory, is supposed to be British work of great antiquity. Tintagel is Tennyson's "many-towered Camelot," where the wise and brave king once held court, with gentle Gawain, Launcelot, the champion of the lake, and generous Sir Tristram. Fuller calls the son of Pendragon "the British Hercules." This Tintagel, "the impregnable fortress," the stronghold of the princes of Cornwall, is frequently mentioned in old romances. It was supposed to become invisible twice in every year. "Dunchine," the castle of the Cleft, is mentioned in Doomsday Book. When the Earls of Cornwall held it, Earl Richard, the son of King John, entertained here his nephew David, Prince of Wales. It next became a crown prison. In 1385 a lord mayor of

London was sent here for a contumacious mayoralty; but in Elizabeth's reign the grave Burleigh shook his head at the cost of the repairs, and allowed the sea and storm at last to conquer. A curse seems on the place now; few lichens spot the stones, no ivy grows over them; there they stand, bare as the sea-vexed rocks below. The cliffs here are hung with samphire. The people of Bossiney believe that Arthur still haunts these ruined battlements, in the shape of a chough or a raven. Cervantes mentions this superstition in his Don Quixote. "Have you not read," he says, "in the famous exploits of King Arthur, of whom there goes an old tradition that this King did not die, but that by magic art he was turned into a raven, and that in process of time he shall reign again, and recover his kingdom and sceptre, for which reason it cannot be proved that from that time to this any Englishman has killed a raven?" The name of Arthur's discreditable queen, Guinivere, is still common in Cornwall under the disguise form of "Jennifer."

Strange to think that perhaps, where those cushions of sea pinks that cover the top of the citadel cliff now grow, Arthur and his knights once trod. Wild seabirds scream where the harpers once sang the praises of their king. The glory and the praise are gone; no words of love or courage are heard now,

only the sound of the mournful waves; as Sir Bedivere said;

> "The whole Round Table is dissolved,
> Which was an image of the mighty world,
> And the days darken round me and the years,
> Among new men, strange faces, other minds."

The crow has a fair westward flight before him now along the wild North Cornish coast, where the granite cliffs are reddened as if with the blood of seamen that have been so often hurled against them by the cruel sea, and left to perish at their base. Every village along this storm-swept coast, this churchyard of sailors, has its own strange legends of vapoury phantom ships, of fairy dances round old cromlechs on the moors, of saints' miracles, of daring smugglers and the caverns they haunted, of mermaids and their love for the sons of men, of giants and their wars, of King Arthur and his knights, of wreckers and their savagery, of witches and their cantrips, of old churches, and the consecrated bells that rejoice and sorrow within their crumbling, salt-corroded towers.

Forrabury church, that stands on the cliff above Boscastle, a town situated in a little seaside ravine, like a small Balaclava, has a fine legend, which the Rev. Mr. Hawker, the Cornish poet, has immortalised. The tower has one bell. From the silent tower of Bottreaux, says Mr. Wilkie Collins, wrongly, no chimes have ever sounded for a marriage, no knell

has ever been heard for a funeral. The reason for the silence is this. Centuries ago the Forrabury people resolved to have a peal of bells that should rival those at Tintagel, which rang merrily at the marriage, and tolled mournfully at the death of King Arthur. The bells were cast, blessed with cross and sigil, and, while still warm from the foundry, shipped for Forrabury. The bark had a halcyon journey with its blessed burden, and was soon in sight of the slate rocks of Bottreaux. As the vesper bell sounded from Tintagel, the pious pilot crossed himself, and knelt to thank God for the safe and prosperous voyage.

The mocking captain sneered at his piety. "Thank God?" said he; "forsooth, thank my hand at the helm; thank the good ship and the stout canvas; thank me at sea, fool, and thank your saints when at home."

The pilot reproved him, but in vain. The vessel was already approaching the harbour, the people of Forrabury stood on the cliffs hailing the white sails every moment looming larger. All at once a supernatural wave rolled mountains high towards the vessel, which sank before it without a struggle. The impious captain and the cursing crew all perished, the pious pilot alone was saved. And now, when storms are brooding, and the sea grows troubled with a mighty anger, the bells of Forrabury are still heard deep below the waves, tolling for the dead.

From that day to this the tower of Bottreaux has remained all but silent.

In a valley running up from the sea near Boscastle stands the ancient mossy church of Minster, overlooking a dell of old oak trees. The tower of this church was pulled down centuries ago. The local legend has it that the monks of old time used to place a light in one of the windows of the tower, to guide belated worshippers at night to their altar. Whether the monks had a special horror of wreckers we know not, but certain it is that sailors and fishermen, looking up the gorge of Boscastle, frequently mistook this tower by day for a landmark, by night for a beacon. Wrecks sometimes happened, and when they did happen, the monks regretfully shared the bales, chests, and kegs, and prayed for the dead men's souls with special fervour. This occurred, however, so frequently that the tower at last got an ill name as a lure to a dangerous port, and one day a band of angry wrecked men marched on the abbey, and, in spite of the monks' prayers, pulled down the tower, some carved stones of which, green with damp, are still to be found hidden under the long rank grass of the churchyard.

Further west the crow comes to Padstow (Petrock's stowe), a high-flavoured old fishing town a mile from the sea. Athelstan, when he conquered Cornwall and Scilly, and pricked the Britons back westward

with his Saxon sword, gave the place his name; but it never adhered, and the Britons soon fell back on their favourite, Saint Petrock. Padstow must have been a place of some importance in the Middle Ages, for, when Liverpool was still unborn, this little Cornish seaport sent two high-sterned turreted vessels to aid Edward the Third and his knights at the siege of Calais. It first declined in the reign of Henry the Eighth, when the harbour began to block, and that Dunbar, now so dangerous, formed, against which shoal, vessels hurrying in for shelter to the *only* place of refuge on that terrible coast of Cornwall, are often driven by eddies that surge inside the point of the Camel estuary. These sands, rich in carbonate of lime (eighty per cent), are in consequence so invaluable as manure, that nearly one hundred thousand tons a year are carted away, so wisely has industry converted the sailors' burial-place into a mine of wealth. The east shore of the estuary, a barren waste of rolling sandhills, gives a wildness to Padstow in fine blue sky weather, but in dull grey days the "towans" glow with a delusive appearance of changeless sunshine—with such enchantments can imagination invest even a desert. The devastating sand cast down here, as if from all the hour-glasses Time has ever shattered, has choked up and partly buried the ancient chapel of St. Enodoc (Sin Kennedy) situated under the east side of the barren emi-

nence of Bray Hill, north of Padstow, and at the opposite side of the harbour. The sand, piled up to the roof, and only scooped away to free the door, has made a small Cornish Pompeii of it. On the north-east side of this desert churchyard a corroded tombstone of 1687 (James the Second), rises from the yellow sea sand. This half buried church was built in 1430 (Henry the Sixth), to replace an ancient oratory of one of those self-devoted Welch or Irish saints, who were the earliest missionaries among the Pagan tin-miners; traces of it were visible at Bray Hill, some fifty years ago, during a temporary shifting of the sand. St. Enodoc's shows nothing above the surface but a little crooked spire of slate stone blackened by the salt spray, and yellow with blotches of lichen. The old carved seats in the interior were worm-eaten centuries ago. Streaks of scarlet and gold still linger on the panels of the roof. The front is Norman, with a rude cable moulding. There is service once a fortnight in this wild place, where the sea choruses the anthem, and the wind howls its savage responses. Mrs. Candour, that indefatigable gossiping friend of Mrs. Grundy, says that some years ago, before the grass had chained down the volatile and restless sand, a certain clergyman, full of zeal to save his fees, was in the habit of descending into the pulpit through the opening of a skylight. The conquering sand of Padstow has been, however, generally strongly

opposed to the establishment, for St. Michael's, on the western shore, between Wadebridge and St. Enodoc, has equally suffered; and on the opposite side of the estuary, near Trevose Head (half way between Hartland and St. Ives), the old church of St. Constantine has been almost entirely engulfed, and the old annual festival, with its limpet and star-gazy pies and hurling matches, has, therefore, for some years been discontinued. The local legend at Padstow is that the bar was the result of the curse of a mermaid, who was shot at whilst sporting in the sea by a devil-may-care young fellow who was looking for gulls. She cursed the town as she sank on her way to a submarine hospital. The old men still say, "A harbour of refuge here would be a great blessing, but nothing will keep the sand out or make the water deep enough to swim a frigate, unless the parsons find out the way to take up the mermaid's curse." St. Petrock's—the fine "late decorated" church of Padstow, with its slender pillars, its rich-coloured windows, and strong-timbered roofs, is built of grey Caraclew stone, but looks as cold and chilly as if it had been paralysed by the Atlantic storms. The old font, with the twelve Apostles sentinelled round it, had once the miraculous power (according to the belief of the superstitious inhabitants of this wild country) of preserving all those who were baptised in it from painful experiences of the gallows.

The charm was broken and the saints' blessing lost for ever some fifty years or so ago, when a Padstow man named Elliot, robbed the mail, and was duly hanged. Honesty has since that been found to be a better security against peculiar complaints of the throat, than even St. Petrock's font.

In the old house of the Prideauxes (1600)—on high wooded ground above Padstow, where once St. Petrock's monastery stood till the Danes burnt it in 981—there are numerous pictures of that clever self-taught Truro artist Opie, or Oppy, as he called himself. He painted all the Prideauxes, male and female, all their servants, and even all the family cats. Opie, the son of a Truro carpenter, was discovered by Peter Pindar smearing out portraits with splashes of house paint. He came to London, aided by Lord Bateman and Dr. Wolcott, in 1777, and helped to illustrate Boydell's Shakespeare. Fashion soon deserted him when it found the rough Cornish man did not flatter, so he took to historical painting, executed several broad vigorous works, and died in 1807. Family picture galleries are like Noah's Ark—they contain strangely contrasted couples; as, for instance, here—Dean Prideaux faces the Duchess of Cleveland; Jupiter and Europa the holy Madonna and Child.

CHAPTER XII.

PENRYN TO THE LAND'S END.

A FLIGHT on to Penryn, that beautiful town on a ridge sloping down to a branch of Falmouth harbour, and facing the wooded slope on which stands the church of St. Gluvias, embedded among trees. North of the town is the farm of Bohethland, the scene of that truly pathetic tragedy which Lillo, the London goldsmith, who wrote immortal "George Barnwell" dramatised.

The story of the "Fatal Curiosity" is this. In the reign of James the First, the scapegrace son of a well-to-do man of Penryn turned bad, went to sea, and became first a terror to the Spaniards, like Drake and Raleigh, then, by an easy slide downward, a pirate. Fifteen years passed, and the father and mother, getting poorer and poorer, retired to Bohethland farm. In the meanwhile the son had gone through fire and water. Off Rhodes his vessel had caught fire while attacking a Turkish ship, and he had saved

himself by swimming. Some jewels he preserved were, however, recognised as belonging to a Turkish pasha, who had been robbed at sea, and the sailor was instantly hurried to the galleys. He escaped, and in an English vessel reached London, whence he embarked again as a doctor's servant, went to the East Indies, saved money, returned to England and on his way from London to Cornwall was wrecked upon his native shore. He went straight to Penryn, carrying a large sum of money in a bow case. He there revealed himself to his sister, who had married a mercer, and arranged to walk as a beggar to Boethland, see his father and mother, and enjoy the luxury of that pleasure till next day, when the sister and her husband should join him and share the joy of the discovery and recognition. The man accordingly went, and, passing as a poor shipwrecked sailor, was permitted to lie down in the barn. He was taken to his bed in the stable and then gave his mother a piece of gold to pay for his lodging, showed her the bow-case belt that he carried under his rags, and blessed her secretly as she closed the door and left him to dream of the happy morrow. But the desire of gold had fired the woman's mind. She went straight to her husband, assured him of the beggar's wealth, overcame his scruples, urged the glories of a fortune, and dragged him, knife in hand, to murder the sleeping stranger who was dreaming of them. On the following day

the sister and her husband came with smiling faces and inquired for the sailor. The old people denied having seen him. The daughter then burst out with the truth, and as a proof told the mother of a well-known mark on his arm that she had recognised. The father rushed to the barn, recognised the mark, and slew himself there with the knife that had wrought the murder. The maddened mother also destroyed herself, and the daughter soon after died of a broken heart. Surely only the story of Œdipus can equal the pathos of this Cornish tragedy.

Falmouth, close to Penryn, in Leland's time, consisted only of two houses, Arwenak, the Killigrew's mansion, and Pendennis Castle, on the point facing Trefusis. Sir Walter Raleigh, landing in the beautiful haven, on his return from that fatal expedition to the coast of Guinea, was struck with the advantage of the noble harbour, with the entrance a mile wide, and represented it to the Council. The village of Penny-come-quick soon arose. In 1652 the custom-house was removed to it from Penryn. In 1660 the place was named Falmouth by royal proclamation; and in 1661 it received its charter. Pendennis castle, that crowns with its grey walls the western bluff, was erected in the reign of Henry the Eighth. The governor (eighty-seven years old) held it for six months, till starved out, against the enraged Parliament. This was the last place, indeed, except Rag-

lan Castle, that stood out for the miserable Stuarts. The Killigrews nobly burned down Arwenak during this siege, to prevent the Parliament generals having quarter there for their troops. The last male Killigrew was killed in a duel at Penryn, and the property went to Lord Wodehouse. There is a good story told of Lady Jane, one of the Killigrews of Arwenak, in Elizabeth's time, and it shows the current feeling against the Spaniards which the lives of Drake and Raleigh illustrated, yet which it is now so difficult to excuse. This energetic lady and her retainers boarded two Hans Town vessels, with Spanish wealth in their holds, that had ventured between St. Anthony and the Manacles, murdered the innocent Spanish factors, and carried off with glee two hogsheads full of shining pieces of eight. The legality of this seizure was not sufficiently appreciated; for the whole party were hanged, except the originator, Lady Jane Killigrew, who was first reprieved and then pardoned. In 1612 she presented the corporation of Penryn with a big silver cup, in gratitude for the sympathy they had shown her.

Not far from Falmouth, near Mabe, is the great egg-shaped Tolmen, seven hundred and fifty tons thirty-three feet long, and fourteen feet deep. Borlase, mad again, considered this stone to be artificially poised, and used as a rock idol; the hollows on the top he called cups, scooped out to receive blood or incense. But

it is now perfectly certain that granite has a tendency to become isolated and left stranded in these denuded shapes. Near the Tolmen, in the parish of Constantine, was the scene, many years ago, of an unprecedented escape. A Mr. Chapman, of Carwithenick, was returning, with his servant, on a dark night, from Redruth, the worse for wine, but just conscious that there was a danger of abandoned and unfenced shafts. They were both leading their horses, when all at once Chapman's horse started back, and his master fell into a pit twenty fathoms (ninety feet) deep. Wonderful to relate, he dropped fifteen fathoms, and then was stopped unhurt by a cross drift only three feet above six fathoms of dark water. Hearing the earth and stones splash below, he thrust his sword into the earth to hold by, and planting his feet against the opposite wall, clung there seventeen long hours, till those who searched for him in the neighbouring shafts heard his groans, set tackle over the black chasm, and drew him up unhurt. He lived many years after.

A beat of the wings further west to Helston, pleasant on its hill ruling over the valley opening to the sea. It was here that Satan, carrying a huge rock (broken up in 1783) that had once closed the mouth of hell, to balance him in his flight through Cornwall, dropped his burden when attacked and put to flight by Michael the Archangel, who still de-

fends the town. The victory is even now commemorated by Furry Day, a festival on the 8th of May. No Helston man works on that day. Furry Day morning is born to the merry sound of church bells. At nine o'clock the people assemble at the grammar school, and demand their annual holiday. They then collect money and go into the fields; "fade" into the country as they call it. About noon they return laden with flowers and green boughs, then till dusk they dance hand-in-hand through Helston streets, and in and out of the different houses, preceded by a fiddler playing the old British Furry tune, and chanting in chorus some traditional doggerel which commences:

"Robin Hood and Little John they both are gone to fair O,
And we will to the merry green wood to see what they do there O."

Cutting the bar of Looe pool, is another Helston festival. When in winter the stream of the Cober cannot filter through the bar of pebbles that Tregeagle dropped, and mills are stopped and floods begin, the Mayor of Helston comes with workmen, presents the lord of the manor with his feudal fee of three halfpence in a leather purse, and obtains permission to cut the bar.

Far west now, the crow passes within sight of the mount that "looks towards Namancos and Bayona's hold," and within hearing of the booming Atlantic

waves; past the mansion of the Godolphins, now a farm house; past Pengersick Castle, built by a merchant whose weight of gold broke his donkey's back; past Prussia Cove, where about 1780 an audacious smuggling landlord actually opened fire on a revenue sloop; and lastly by Tremen Keverne, where there stands some boulders of ironstone to which is attached a most damaging legend of St. Just. The legend deposes that once on a while St. Just, of the Land's End, paid a visit to St. Keverne of the Lizard, who entertained him hospitably. The fact is, however (we cannot conceal it), that St. Just behaved with shameful ingratitude, for he went off with several valuable articles of plate in his pockets. St. Keverne, counting his spoons, discovering his loss, and more than suspecting his artful guest, started at once in pursuit, only stopping at Crousa Down to pocket three large blocks of granite of about a quarter of a ton each. He overtook his saintly brother at Breage, and at once charged him with the robbery. St. Just was at first astonished, then angry, lastly furious. The great and good men, lamentable to say, soon came to blows; but St. Keverne so plied the erring brother with stones that he at last took to his heels, disburdening himself of the plate as he ran. The missiles of the injured St. Keverne are those very stones now lying by the road-side at Tremen Keverne.

At Perran-uthnoe, on the coast between Cuddan

Point and Marazion (the Jew's town), just as Mount's Bay opens to the eye, there is a rocky recess shown, where an ancestor of the Trevelyans, the only survivor, rode ashore when Lyonesse, with its one hundred and forty churches, and all the region between the Land's End and the Scilly Isles, was submerged by a sudden inundation of the sea. There is a legend at Cuddan Point, close by, that a wicked lord of Pengersick was feasting in a boat, in which there was a silver table, when the craft suddenly went down. Fishermen have seen the table in deep water, with the skeletons still seated round it. One thing is certain, that the sea even now is making great inroads on this coast. The Eastern Green, between Penzance and Marazion, has been sensibly diminished during the last fifty years; and the Western Green, now a sandy beach, was all pasturage in the reign of Charles the Second. Beneath the sands of St. Michael's Bay black vegetable mould is found, with nut-leaves and branches, roots and trunks of oak-trees, and bones of red deer and elk. As ripe nuts have been dug up, it is supposed that the sea must have broken in in the autumn.

Penzance, sacked by Spaniards in 1595, and by Fairfax in 1646, boasts one curious custom, which perpetuates the old sun and fire worship. On the 23rd and 28th of June, the summer solstice, the eves of St. John and St. Peter, the people of Pen-

zance, Mousehole, Newleyn, Marazion, and the Mount light tar barrels and brandish torches, till the whole bay glows with a crescent of flame. The people then join hands and play at thread-the-needle in the streets, running madly about shouting, "An eye! an eye! an eye!" When they suddenly stop the last couple, raising their clasped hands, form the eye through which all the other couples run. The next day is spent idly on the water—"having a pen'orth of sea," they call it—or in boating parties with music.

On the west side of Mount's Bay, the crow visits the village of Mousehole, because there, in 1778, aged one hundred and two, died old Dolly Pentreath, the last person who habitually spoke Cornish, which closely resembled the Celtic of Wales, the Highlands, and Britanny. There are only two printed books existing in Cornish. Dr. Moreman, of Menhenoit, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, was the first who taught his parishioners the Lord's Prayer in English. In 1640, at St. Feock, near Truro, the Sacrament was administered in Cornish; and in 1678 sermons in Cornish were preached near the Lizard Point. In 1700 the language was still spoken by the tinners and fishermen of St. Just, and round Mount's Bay. In 1758 the language had ceased to be spoken, and in 1776 there were but four or five persons living who could speak Cornish.

Almost every cove and headland round the Land's End has its legend. One of the wildest is told of Porthcurnow Cove, near the Logan stone. It is a lonely cove, where St. Levan once dwelt, and it still contains the ruins of a small oratory. A spectre ship —a black square-rigged unearthly craft—is often seen here, usually followed by a boat. It comes in from sea about nightfall, when the mists rise, glides up over the sands towards Bodelan, and vanishes at Chygwiden No crew are visible in the spectre ship, and bad fortune follows those who see the phantom vessel. At St. Ives, on stormy nights, a lady with a lantern is sometimes seen moving over the rocks on the east side of the island. They say it is the ghost of a lady who, long ago, lost her child in a wreck, but was herself saved.

The most weird legend, however, is that of Port Towan. They tell you there that a fisherman, walking one still night on the sands, heard a voice from the sea exclaim three times:

"The hour is come, but not the man."

At the third cry a black figure appeared on the top of the hill, paused for a moment, then rushed down the cliffs over the sands, and was lost in the sea.

The Chair Ladder Rock at Pardenick, one of Turner's favourite Cornish scenes, was once the chosen observatory of Madgy Figgy, the most

wicked witch that ever brewed a storm. In that lofty granite chair she used to sit rocking herself with delight when a brave ship foundered.

And now one flight more brings the crow to Pedn-an-Laaz, the LAND'S END, that great pile of granite that thrusts itself forward, the very bowsprit of England, into the Atlantic waves. Its great cliffs are darkened with the salt spray of the sea mists, its caverns moan ceaselessly as with the voices of imprisoned spirits. Gulls and cormorants watch on its ledges and clefts for the bodies of the drowned that are cast on shore. Those strange rocks, the Shark's Fin and the Armed Knight, rise breast high in the yeasty sea, like giants wading out to the cluster of rocks where the Longships Lighthouse raises its beacon star. On a clear morning from the Land's End a keen eye can just distinguish the islands of Scilly, nine leagues distant, like faint blue clouds in the horizon. Between these Cassiterides of the Phœnicians, who came to Cornwall to trade for tin, and the Land's End, lies the buried Lyonesse, the country over which King Arthur hunted. There used to be a horse-shoe cut on the edge of the precipice to the left of the Land's End, to commemorate a narrow escape which occurred there. An officer, quartered at Falmouth, and on a visit to Penzance, laid a bragging wager that he would ride to the very extreme point of the Land's End. He was already far along the dangerous, lofty,

and narrow path, when his horse, frightened by the feather in his master's cap, began backing obstinately towards the yawning precipice. The rider leaped off, but the bridle caught in the buttons of his coat, and he was dragged to the very brink of the rocks before his companions could disengage him. The horse rolled over and was dashed to pieces on the beach.

And now the crow, turning again for a quick flight back to the golden cross upon St. Paul's, from whence he must soon venture forth eastward, strikes out, his black wings upborne by the west wind fresh from the Atlantic, for his sooty home in the great city.

SECOND FLIGHT.

DUE EAST.

CHAPTER XIII.

ESSEX.—BARKING TO COLCHESTER.

THE restless, inquisitive bird, his wings still wet with the salt spray of the Atlantic that scatters over Cornwall, rises from his favourite perch, the massive cross upon the airy summit of the great, black, dominating dome, and bears away straight across Whitechapel's sordidness for the flat green pastures, soaking vapours, and riverside marshes of fertile. Essex, the calf-herding, oyster-rearing, teazle-growing county, of a million acres, and four hundred thousand people. The towers of Chelmsford, Colchester, Maldon, and Harwich are ready for his alighting, and the great blue-roofed home he inhabits is always open for his reception. The patient toilers in the saffron, hop, and carraway fields; the men scooping out Colchester oysters for Billingsgate; the Maldon fishermen, red-faced and scale-bespangled as Tritons; the shambling drovers bringing up wayward calves to Essex railway stations;

and the heavy-built Dutch sailors at Harwich will not observe the silent bird as he drifts by, a mere black flake against the rainy sky, reconnoitring, like a military spy from a balloon, the marshy, well-wooded, well-watered county that forms the dull muddy shore of the Thames from Blackwall, at the confluence of the sea, to Shoeburyness.

At Barking the bird first alights on the banks of the Roding. Barking was the Barg-ing of the Saxons—"the fort in the meadow"—and the lines (so long is Time in effacing man's work) may still be traced of the old walls that, perhaps, Saxon thanes raised to protect their churls or neatherds from the Danes, who sacked and burnt London in 835, seven years after Egbert had dissolved the Heptarchy, conquered Essex, and melted the seven Saxon diadems into one golden circlet for his own proud wearing; and two years after he had held his first united parliament in London, although Winchester was still his capital. Whether the Danish robbers—as good sailors as horsemen—had discovered the juicy richness of Essex beeves as early as the time of Alfred, who twice rebuilt London, is uncertain; but this at least is certain, that in 870 the hardy Norsemen, leaving their sable homes of yore (and not foreseeing the future destruction of the fleet of Hastings by King Alfred), ran up Barking Creek in 870, and massacred or carried off a whole convent of Bene-

dictine nuns. These nuns had been planted at Barking in 670 by Erkenwald, the Saxon Bishop of London, who sang praise to God in that great westminster dedicated to St. Peter by Sibert, King of Essex, on the site of a temple of Apollo, reared on a low, marshy, thorny island, and which minster Peter himself, hailing a wherry on the Surrey side, came over with a boatload of angels to bless and consecrate. King Edgar raised again the shattered and desecrated convent where so much martyrs' blood had been shed by rude Pagan hands. After the death of this amorous, wolf-slaying, monk-beloved king, his widow Elfrida (to win whom Edgar had murdered her first husband) was abbess of Barking, and the convent became a royal one, second only to Wilton, Winchester, and Shaftesbury. The Barking abbess was paramount of all the manors in the half hundred, a very great lady, therefore, at Chadwell, Ilford, and Ripple, and much to be honoured wherever her plain black and white robes (in the pride that apes humility) were seen as she angled with her nuns upon the Thames, or ambled on her palfrey towards the cool green glades of Epping. Through the pointed arch of that square embattled gateway many generations of half-willing sisters of the convent have passed to their living death within, and their burial without the icy prison walls. The abbey remained wealthy for eight or nine centuries; at the

Dissolution it was valued at one thousand and eighty-four pounds six shillings and twopence (a large sum for those times); and Edward the Sixth, feeding his noble bloodhounds with as rich sops as Henry the Eighth had tossed to his ravening pack, granted Barking Convent to Lord Clinton.

After the Conqueror slew Harold on that Sussex hill, and bore down through brave Kent upon sturdy and pugnacious London, and burnt Southwark, just as a slight sample of what he could do, he retired to the little quiet Essex village of Barking, where the London portreeves, aldermen, and burgesses swore fealty to him; and rested while Gundulphus, his fighting bishop of Rochester, was building a White Tower for him on the site of Cæsar's riverside castrum. At Barking, amid the green meadows, with an outlook on the creek, the fierce Norman received homage from those chieftains so slow to surrender, Morcar, Earl of Northumberland, and Edgar Earl of Mercia. When William returned to town to raise his banners upon the new White Tower, Baynard, one of his barons, had built a castle in Upper Thames Street (Carron House) and Gilbert de Montfichet, a fortress in Blackfriars (now Times Office, Printing-house square); so there was a triple curb (their barking and their bite were both stopped now) in the mouth of poor prostrate London. One great man at least has therefore trod the streets of the

Essex market town. And what else does Barking boast? Well, an Elizabethan market-house, and the right (thanks to the grant of a Mr. Fowkes in 1686—James the Second) of sending two boys to Christ's Hospital, where, probably, at this very moment, two noisy hearty Barking lads, in belted blue petticoats and canary-bird stockings, disport behind the playground bars, or con undelectable Delectus in vaulted rooms. No doubt if you were to call out, "Any one here from Barking?" off the Dogger bank or near a fleet of herring vessels on the Scotch coast, a good many hoarse Essex voices would answer you; for Barking's sons are hardy fishermen, and frequenting all the finest waters round our tight little island, return to bear their scaly spoil to Billingsgate. Other hardy Barking men float coal and timber to Barking Wharf, while her less enterprising, but scarcely less commendable children tend those great tracts of potatoes that bloom around Barking for the London market, and for those metropolitan potatoe sheds that seem to have an affinitude to small coal stores.

It was in a sly house near Barking—convenient for men hid in Spanish cloaks slipping up the creek from the Strand and Southwark water stairs—that the Gunpowder Plot is supposed to have been brewed, two years after the king's accession, by that detestable fanatic, Guido Fawkes, the son of a York medical man, who, serving Spain in Flanders, had there im-

bibed the Jesuit poison and the Castilian bigotry. The Roman Catholics, enraged at their persecution by the son of Mary Stuart, their latest martyr, planned a terrible revenge. At Barking, and in a house at Butcher-row (Picket-street, now pulled down for the new Law Courts), and probably also at Northumberland House, these bloodthirsty enthusiasts resolved on the destruction of the King, Lords, and Commons in one instantaneous whirlwind of fire. It was the wild and desperate thought of Catesby, and he had proposed it to Percy, one of the Northumberland family, who, in a sally of passion, had talked of killing the king. These two "instruments of divine wrath against the heretics," as they believed themselves, then sent Thomas Winter over to Flanders to bring back Fawkes. They had, at first, scruples about destroying the Catholic noblemen who might be present as spectators or attendants of the king when he opened the House of Parliament; but Desmond, a priest, and Garnet, the superior of the English Jesuits, had reasoned them out of all those absurd doubts, and proved to them that the interests of true religion required the holocaust. Four of the conspirators, Sir Everard Digby, Rookwood, Tresham, and Grant, when the mine was fired, were to attack Lord Harrington's house in Warwickshire, seize the Princess Elizabeth, and proclaim her queen, while the king's second son, Charles, was to be seized or assassi-

nated by Percy. All through the spring and summer of 1604, after the Hampton Court Conference, where the pedant king had sat as an arbitrating Solomon between the servile bishops and the anti-Ritualistic Puritans, these black-souled men of Barking brooded in ambush in the quiet Essex town, and laid their plans. They bound some twenty men to secrecy, and made them, when they took the oath, receive the sacrament. All that spring and summer they spent to and fro between Butcher-row and Barking, or shut up with arms and provisions in a house they had hired, next door to St. Stephen's Chapel, where they dug through a wall, three yards thick, and hiring a coal-cellar next it, filled the vault with thirty-six barrels of gunpowder, covered with fagots and billets of wood. We all know how the attempt failed. The midnight before parliament opened Fawkes was seized at the door of the vault, with slow-match and tinder in his pocket. Under the combined tortures of the dungeon of Little Ease, the crushing Boots, the Scavenger's Daughter, and the dislocating Rack, his spirit gave way, and he disclosed the names of all his accomplices. There is an old London tradition that Catesby, Percy, and other of the conspirators, stood on a hill, still unbuilt over, a little to the right of the Hampstead-road, and waited for the great crash to come, and the pillar of red smoke to rise; but, hearing that Fawkes was taken and the game

lost, they took horse and dashed off to Warwickshire to aid Digby in seizing the Princess Elizabeth, who had, however, already escaped to Coventry and roused the country. Fawkes, Digby, Rookwood, Winter, and Garnet the Jesuit, were all beheaded and quartered in Smithfield. The Roman Catholics, easily overlooking Garnet's crimes, believed that his blood wrought miracles, and that portraits of him appeared in barley straws picked up from beneath the scaffold.

From Barking to Epping is no great flight. Of all places of Cockney pilgrimage round London, there is none so dear to the Eastern Londoner as Epping, and the ten thousand acres of brushwood coppice and plantation that constitute those romantic and agreeable fictions known as Epping and Hainault forests. Thither, all the year through, from cold, cheerless, early spring to the later time of May blossoms and oak apples, all through burning dusty June down to the fall of the leaf, those long covered vans indigenous in London holidays, repair. Temperance clubs, and the reverse, Foresters in green tunics and brigand boots, citizens of all kinds, jovial, noisy, and as a rule fond of refreshment and "kiss in the ring," drive out to the quondam forest, and return more jaded than their horses. The habit of these revellers is to wave green boughs, and roar Champagne Charlie, Tommy Dodd, or some other convivial harmonic idiotcy

of the day. It is considered "the right thing" among them for the men to wear the women's bonnets, and the women the men's hats; also to shout at every other vehicle they pass, to beat each other playfully about the head with violins, and to bray defiance at any one who laughs at them from public-house doors. The impromptu carnivals of the East-end are neither gay nor attractive, but there is plenty of eating and drinking, and a good deal of coarse hearty fun, such as the unsophisticated Saxon affects. It is something, too, to have been told your fortune by real gipsies, and a great consolation also to know that while the fair lady slights you, the dark lady looks kindly towards you and will eventually give you her hand, and present you with a large and only too flourishing family.

Even in Elizabethan times, when Londoners used to go to Epping and bring in the May, the forest was always a place where citizens disported themselves, blew off the smoke of London, came to see real trees growing, and flew their shafts in accordance with good old Roger Ascham's rules. Here at High Beeches they could set up their ringed targets, and try the long flight and the clout and rover shots, or pop away at the popinjay for cups of sack and flagons of ale; while the dancers and skittle-players revelled at the door of the thatched country inn, partaking at the fountain-head of those special dainties of Epping

and of Waltham hissing sausages, pork as white as chicken, rich mellow cream, and fresh country butter that smelt of meadow flowers. No wonder that from Elizabeth's days to those of John Gilpin, "Hey, for Epping upland!" has been a London holiday cry.

By-the-by, would any kind Member of Parliament who is curious about the ways of our costly government, some night catch the Speaker's eye, and inquire what is a royal chase, and why Epping should be one still, though without forest and without deer? Also, who has a right to alienate from the people the ten thousand acres of Epping and Hainault, and to grant permission to build villas and rear plantations? Also, who pays the lord warden, and the four verderers, and what they do for their money? The answers might be interesting to liberal economists who are resolved and not merely pretending to retrench.

Every Easter Monday, an unfortunate, tame, highly educated and knowing stag used to be turned out at Epping, and pursued by a shambling pack of aldermen, grooms, shopmen, sporting touts, and novices of all kinds. George Cruikshank caricatured the hunt, and indeed a more pitiful and ludicrous shadow of the royal sports of the Norman kings in the ex-forest could hardly have been presented. It seemed to be a rule that no one inured to the pigskin was permitted to ride, and Osbaldiston or Assheton

Smith would not have marched through Coventry with such a rabble rout of Whitechapel chivalry for twice ten thousand pounds. Flights over timber? Dives into ditches, and bursting through bullfinches? Not a bit. Rather head-foremost into bramble-bushes. Double rails, in and out? No, but humble-cum-stumbles, with the hacks on the top of them. It was a wild hunt indeed, and the stag was the only creature who really enjoyed it.

South-east of Epping, across the as yet unimmortalised region, stretch the once scrubby wilds of Hainault, disforested in 1851. Here, among the thorn and hazel bushes, once rose the great Fairlop oak that was blown down by a February storm in 1820. This giant patriarch, with a trunk forty-eight feet in circumference, was five centuries old. Bursting the acorn just before the death of Henry the Fifth, it had braved all the tempests of the Tudors and Stuarts, had outlived Queen Anne and three of the Georges, and, eventually, quite overcome by the accession of George the Fourth, by Divine right King of England, Scotland, and Ireland, submitted to Fate the year that glorious monarch ascended the throne. An ancient fair used to be held under this great tree the first Friday of every July. This social gathering had been originated by Mr. Daniel Day, an eccentric pump and block-maker of Wapping, who, having a small estate hard by, used to

annually repair to the oak's pleasant shadow (nearly three hundred feet in diameter), and feast a party of friends on rural beans and bacon. Wishing to perpetuate the pleasure he had so often experienced under the oak of Fairlop, Mr. Day kindly bequeathed a fund to keep up the custom. The tree, from which a man-of-war could have been built, contributed timber to form a pulpit for St. Pancras Church, and the site of the oak is still kept in remembrance by the pic-nic and gipsying parties that make the spot their rendezvous.

It was in a cave in Epping Forest that that very contemptible thief, Dick Turpin, a Whitechapel butcher by profession, hid when hard pressed on the road, circa 1730 (George the Second). This low rascal, who was never of "the high Toby," and not, indeed, a true highwayman at all, was the son of a farmer of Hempstead. He began by stealing cattle at Plaistow, and selling the hides at Waltham Abbey. He soon joined smugglers to run brandy in the Hundreds of Essex, and then headed a gang of deer-stealers in Epping Forest. His first burglary with violence was at Loughton, where he and his companions stole four hundred pounds, and tortured the old woman of the house. He next broke into a house in Barking, and carried off seven hundred pounds. His men then forced the house of Mr. Mason, the keeper of Epping Forest, and in smash-

ing a china punch-bowl a hoard of one hundred and twenty guineas showered down upon their heads. A reward of one hundred pounds being offered, and two of the gang seized and hung in chains, Turpin and the band betook themselves to a cave large enough to hold them and their horses, between the King's Oak and the Loughton road, in Epping Forest. The cave was in a thicket, so ambuscaded with thorn bushes and brambles that the thieves could observe travellers without being themselves seen. It was near this cave that Turpin first dipped his hands in blood. A gentleman's servant and a higgler went out, armed, to try and earn the reward of one hundred pounds by taking Turpin. The thief, seeing them beating the covert, mistook them for poachers, and called out,

"You won't find a hare, man, in that thicket."

"No," said the servant, presenting his gun, "but I've found a Turpin," and bade the rogue surrender.

Turpin, speaking in a friendly way, gradually backed into his cave, and, seizing a loaded gun he had placed at the entrance, shot the servant dead on the spot, and the higgler instantly fled. For some time Turpin skulked about the forest, but, being at last hunted by bloodhounds, he left this retreat for ever. Soon after this, while Turpin was waiting for his wife at a public-house at Hertford, he was recognised by

a butcher to whom he owed money, and had to make his escape by leaping out of a window. On his way to London with his associates, King and Potter, Turpin stopped a Mr. Major, near the Green Man, in Epping Forest, and changed horses with him. Watch being set round the Red Lion, in Whitechapel, where Turpin left his stolen horse, King was seized when he came to fetch it, and, in firing at the constable, Turpin shot his friend by accident. Turpin then rode away into Yorkshire, and lived for some time by stealing horses in Lincolnshire and selling them in his own neighbourhood. He was at last seized, tried, found guilty, and hanged at York, in April, 1739. He talked to the hangman for half an hour, bowed carelessly to the spectators, and at last flung himself from the ladder.

Waltham Abbey is too near to Epping for the crow to pass it unnoticed, since it has a legend of its own that connects it with Hastings and Harold. The river Lea, that runs into the Thames, here divides into several streams, traditionally said to be artificial channels cut by Alfred the Great, in order to leave the Danish robber's fleet high and dry in the rank Essex meadows. The streams now feed powder and silk mills. Waltham belonged to Tovi, the standard-bearer of King Canute, whose son, Athelstan, proving a prodigal, squandered his money, and sold this, with others of his father's estates. Edward the Confessor

bestowed Waltham on Earl Harold, his brother-in-law, the son of Godwin, who built and endowed an Abbey at Waltham, giving each of the canons a manor, and the dean six. It is thought by many historians that when, on that fatal October day that Harold fell on the Sussex hill slain by the Norman arrow, his dead body was brought to the abbey at Waltham that he had endowed. A monument—always, at least, shown as his all through the Middle Ages—was opened in the reign of Elizabeth, and found to contain a male skeleton. William the Norman, trampling over the grave of his dead enemy, soon laid his heavy hand upon the Essex abbey, hallowed by the Holy Crucifix from Montecute (Somersetshire). He dragged from the monks' sacristies many rich chalices and jewelled robes, but left the frightened canons their right to their fat Essex meadows and the rank pastures by the river Lea. Henry the Second dissolved the foundation, the canons having grown dissolute and revelling. In 1177, on the eve of Pentecost, the king himself visited Waltham, when sixteen new canons of the Augustine order from Cirencester, Oseney, and Chichester were inducted, and the church was exempted from episcopal jurisdiction. The king then confirmed to the canons all the land given by Harold, and added Siwardston and Epping; Richard Cœur-de-Lion afterwards gave the abbey Harold's park, the village

of Nassing, and several hundred acres of land. The Abbot of Waltham was one of those proud mitred barons who was entitled to a seat in parliament. The present church was formerly the nave of the old abbey. At the dissolution, the revenues of Waltham Abbey were nine hundred pounds three shillings and fourpence.

The extent and limits of the port of London are closely connected with the reaches along the Essex shore. They are bounded by a straight line running from the North Foreland, in Kent, to the opposite Essex promontory, the Naze (the Nore), the said line cutting through the Gun-fleet beacon, including all within that line westward, with all the channels, streams, and tributary rivers feeding the Thames as far up as London Bridge, excepting the known right, liberty, and privileges of the ports of Sandwich and Ipswich. Within the port, three harbour masters rule supreme: one from London Bridge to Wapping Dock Stairs; the second from Wapping to Limehouse; and the third from Limehouse to Bugsby's Hole. About a mile and a half from Leigh, near Southend, where the dull coast rises into low cliffs, there is a terminal stone marking the limit of the jurisdiction of the Conservators of the Thames.

In the early ages the Essex marshes were conquered by the Belgæ, who, hewing and burning their way to-

wards London, were, in the reign of Nero, discomfited in Essex by Cassivelaunus and his sons, Cunobelin and that Caractacus who was taken in chains to Rome. When Alfred vanquished and baptised the Danish chief Guthrun, he assigned Essex to him to hold in fealty. In 1010, King Ethelred ceded Essex to Sweyn of Denmark, and in 1016 Canute defeated Edmund Ironside at Ashingdon, near Rochford, and, taking London, divided the kingdom with the defeated Saxon. It was no wonder, therefore, that the Danish kings loved Essex, that Harold founded Waltham Abbey, that Canute gave his name to Canewdon, that overlooks the vale of the Crouch, or, finally, that the same king founded St. Peter's Church at Hockley-on-the-Hill, in thanksgiving for his crowning victory at Ashingdon.

The crow, as he flits past the low-lying Essex shore, where the miles are so long, the stiles so high, and the calves so good, passes many spots of legendary and historical interest. Yonder Southend towers on a wooded hill, with its gravelly strand stretching below, and its long bowsprit of a jetty, looking across at the forts, dockyards, and minster church of Sheerness, the shining estuary of the Medway, the hills of Sheppey Island, and the broad blue bosom of the German Ocean. At South Benfleet the Danes were fond of landing. At Canewdon there was a Roman station, and the ruins of the castle close by show

traces of Roman herring-bone work. From the Langdon Hills, near Stanford-le-Hope, whose church can be seen plainly from the higher slopes of Plumpstead Common opposite, the windings of the Thames can be seen for forty miles, from London to the Nore, where it is fifteen miles wide. At Leigh—eight centuries ago famous for grapes, in the days when wine was made in England—there is an oyster fishery, founded in 1690 (William the Third). At Bell House, famous for its great elm trees and fine deer, Queen Elizabeth, who did not disdain to make friends of her subjects, was once entertained.

Then the black wings, fanned by the fresh free river air, flit past the bold cliffs of Prittlewell, where, some years ago, the fishermen could see in the deep water the remains of the submerged church of Milton. At Rayleigh there is a Danish camp, and at Rochford stands the Hall where poor Anna Boleyn was born. At Lawless Court, close by, a curious manorial custom still prevails, as eccentric as any of the old modes, in feudal times, of doing homage to the suzerain. The Lawless copyhold court is held on King's Hill, between midnight and cock-crow, on the first Wednesday after Michaelmas; and every tenant is fined to the amount of double his rent for every hour of absence. The minutes are made by the steward with a piece of coal, and the business is all transacted in mysterious whispers. The custom

is said to have been established as a punishment by a lord of the manor who had discovered a conspiracy of the tenants against himself. In the reign of Henry the Eighth this little Essex village (Rochford) gave the title to an earldom long since extinct.

And now the crow presents arms, as well as he can without any, as he passes Tilbury forts, sacred to the memories of Sheridan and Queen Elizabeth. Henry the Eighth built a block-house here on the site of a chapel of St. Mary Magdalen, and Charles the Second enlarged it into a full-sized fort, to check the Dutch. It is stronger than it looks, for its inner moat is one hundred and eighty feet broad; it has two brick redoubts on the land side, and the whole district round can be laid under water. The esplanade, mounted with cannon, is extensive, and the bastions are the largest in England. It was at Tilbury, in April, 1588, facing Gravesend, that the Earl of Leicester marshalled his twenty-two thousand pikemen and hagbuteers, and his one hundred horse, to protect London; and here the lion-hearted Elizabeth rode through the lines of the camp, and afterwards made that brave speech which showed her to be of the true metal.

"Let tyrants fear. I have always so behaved myself that, under God, I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and good-

will of my subjects. And therefore am I come amongst you at this time, not as for my recreation or sport, but being resolved, in the midst and heat of the battle, to live or die amongst you all, and lay down for my God, and for my kingdom, and for my people, my honour and blood even in the ashes. I know I have but the body of a weak and feeble woman, *but I have the heart of a king, and of a King of England, too,* and think foul scorn that France, or Spain, or any other prince of Europe, shall dare to invade the borders of my realms!"

A few weeks more, and the great Armada (one hundred and fifty giant vessels, with nineteen thousand soldiers, eight thousand sailors, two hundred galley slaves, and two thousand brass cannon) set sail towards England. Not one half of the luckless vessels ever returned to Spain.

East Tilbury lost its tower at the south-west angle, from the battering of the Dutch vessels when they burnt our fleet in the Medway—a shame and disgrace that required much Batavian blood to wipe out. The ancient ferry was at Tilbury, and here Claudius is supposed to have crossed the Thames, in order to follow the Britons into Kent. The old Roman road, at Higham Causeway, can still be traced. At Little Thurrock, close by Tilbury, there is a field in which are curious passages and caverns cut in the chalk. Some people call them "Danes' Holes," and think

they were places of retreat; others term them Cunbelin's gold mines; while others believe them to have been ancient British granaries. West Tilbury (twenty-four miles from London) has a church with a wooden spire, the tower having long ago fallen from the blows of time or of Dutch cannon. St. Chad, a Saxon bishop, mentioned by the Venerable Bede, who converted the Saxons of Essex in 630, had his episcopal residence here.

A coast of low sandy downs, trenched with watercourses, and resounding with the boom of heavy guns —that is Shoeburyness, where the great guns are tried and the armour plates tested. There are the furrows of a Danish camp beyond the headland (take care of the cannon-balls), and Roman arms have been also found there, so Romans must have encamped near where our Artillery men do now. There is an old Essex tradition that under Maplin sands lies buried an ancient city. From the head ıd of Shoeburyness to beyond St. Osyth's Point the coast is a dreary succession of low, flat, aguish marshes, broad sandy shoals or swamps, and green seaweed-blackened cliffs. Within the sea wall stretch mournful sandy plains haunted by sea-fowl and lined by the creeks of the Blackwater. Mr. Walcott has painted a picture of this part of Essex, which is quite a bit of Ruysdael in words.

"Essex, he says, "is like a large ship at anchor;

there is a wild misty light, a neutral-tinted landscape, a silent repose in those wide motionless plains, dreary and spacious, ever struggling with the ocean for existence, land and sea of one colour, subject to inundations by waves, which are again constrained by man to retire, dykes, and walls, and whistling reeds, the only signs of habitation being—

> A lowly cottage, where we see,
> Stretched far and wide, the waste enormous marsh,
> Where, from the frequent bridge,
> Like emblems of infinity,
> The trenched waters race from sky to sky."

Braintree, where the crow next skims, was a great station, in the time of Erasmus, for pilgrims bound to the shrine of our Lady of Walsingham, in Norfolk. No doubt the ordinary professional pilgrim was latterly rather a scurvy, thievish, lying fellow; but amongst the devout bands were people of all ranks and classes, and even Henry the Eighth, when young, plodded there barefoot from Bosham.

CHAPTER XIV.

PLESHY TO DUNMOW.

DUNMOW is not far from Pleshy, and Pleshy is a place not to be lightly passed over by any observant crow, being a Shakespearean place, with the Bard's sign-manual engraved upon every mossy stone of its ruins. In the quiet little Essex village, embedded amid wheat and clover, there is a grassy enclosure, and in the midst of that green space rises a high steep mound, with stumps of old walls showing here and there among the turf, and trees and bushes sprinkling the slopes. That high steep mound, ringed round by a deep ditch, which is crossed by an old bridge with a high stilted arch of old dark red brick, has been trodden by many kings. Pleshy was from time immemoral a fortress, set apart for a place of vantage, defiance, or safety. It seems always to have won the soldier's eye, and to have set him rearing walls and digging trenches. It was first the Prætorian centre of a Roman camp, and money of

the Legionaries has been found here. The Norman had a quick eye for seeing strong places, and quick hands to seize them. They built here early in Stephen's troublous reign, when Geoffrey Mandeville, Earl of Essex, reared his keep upon the mound of Pleshy, and his emblazoned standard was a signal to draw together his men in steel from their long forays along the valley of the Colne and the low Essex shore.

Afterwards there dwelt here, among his knights, the wise but harsh and sevêre Duke of Gloucester, uncle of the weak and reckless King Richard the Second. Gloucester waged perpetual war on the Duke of Ireland and others of the young king's weak and wicked favourites, imprisoned Sir Simon Burley, a great warrior in Gascony under the Black Prince, and finally, in a rough and despotic way, settled matters by beheading Sir Simon and his friends and fellow minions, Sir Robert Trevilian, Sir Nicholas Bramber, and Sir John Standwick. Richard of Bordeaux, the son of the Black Prince, had begun well. He quelled Wat Tyler's rebellion in a chivalrous way, by riding boldly among the Kentish bowmen and hammermen in Smithfield. He had led an army into Scotland and burnt Melrose. He had taken up arms against his turbulent uncles and discontented barons; and lastly, striking down the Irish Kernes and Gallowglasses, in spite of their knives and darts, had reduc-

ed to submission the Kings of Meath, Ulster, Leinster, and Connaught, and knighted them all in Dublin Cathedral at the Feast of Our Lady in March. But gradually this young Absolom, this "plunger" of those days, grew worse and worse, more wantonly extravagant, more despotic, and, like Edward the Second, surrendered himself to dissolute and dangerous counsellors, abhorred by prelates, Lords and Commons. There, was, however, about this weak and feminine king a feminine cunning also.

He dreaded the Lord of Pleshy, his youngest uncle, for his harsh reproofs, and his open contempt, and hated with still more deadly hatred because it was rumoured that Gloucester would soon seize the crown and reign from the Thames to the Humber. Into Richard's ready ear wicked Achitophels poured the "leprous distilment" of their devilish counsels. One summer afternoon the fine young king, rich in cloth of gold and jingling with golden bells, set out from Eltham with his retinue to visit his stern uncle at Pleshy. The king arrived as the warm sunset light steeped the royal towers, and the duke, who was rough and soldierly in his habits, was already rising from supper. Food was served to the king, and the meal over, Richard besought the duke to ride with him to London, to give him advice on matters of state. The lure took, the trap fell, the duke was snared. He made himself ready for the thirty miles

evening ride, the king graciously saluted the duchess and her attendants, and set forth. It was a cruel deed, and basely wrought. The duke, once cajoled from his eyrie, had but his numbered days to live. The king rode hard, avoiding Brentwood, and at Stratford he spurred ahead. It was about half-past ten at night, in a lane that led to the Thames, that the king laughingly waved his hand to his uncle and struck spurs into his horse. That moment the Earl Marshal and his clump of spears rode up and arrested the duke. Gloucester struggled and shouted to the king. Richard, deaf to mercy, would not however turn his head, but rode on straight to his lodgings in the Tower. The duke they forced at once into a boat that took him to a vessel lying ready at anchor in the Thames. The Earl Marshal and his pitiless men also embarked. The wind and the tide were favourable, the vessel dropped down the river, and arrived late in the evening afterwards at Calais, of which place the earl was governor. The next day the king returned to Eltham and sent the Earls of Arundel and Warwick to the Tower. The Dukes of Lancaster and York, astonished at the king's courage, were mortified at their own irresolution.

The duke refused leave to visit the town of Calais, felt his death was near, and begged for a priest to calmly confess his sins, and help him to appeal to God for mercy. His end was very near; as far as Frois-

sart could ascertain, the day after his arrival, when the duke was sitting down to dinner, as the tables were laid, and he was already about to wash his hands, four men rushed from an adjoining chamber and strangled him with a towel. Froissart, however, asserts that Hall, one of the men engaged, afterwards confessed that the duke was smothered with pillows. Gloucester's body was then undressed and covered with furred mantles, and a report spread that he had died of a fit of apoplexy while dressing for dinner. The Earl Marshal, who was nearly related to the duke, instantly put on mourning for him, as did all the English knights and squires in Calais. The body of the murdered man was then embalmed, put into a leaden cofin, and sent to England. The corpse was landed at Hadleigh Castle, that fortress whose mossy ruins still look down upon the junction of the Thames and Medway. There the dishonoured corpse, to which nobody dared show respect, was put into a cart and sent, without escort, to Pleshy, to be buried in the church of the Holy Trinity, which the duke himself had founded, and endowed with twelve canonries. There at last the stern duke found real mourners; for the duchess, his son Humphrey, and his two daughters shed bitter tears of rage and grief at his murder. Double cause indeed had the duchess to grieve, for the king had just had his uncle, the Earl of Arundel, beheaded in

Cheapside before his own eyes, and the Earl of Warwick banished for life to the Isle of Man.

Pleshy (Plaisant, the pleasant place) has become a desolation; but—God's vengeance may sometimes seem slow, though it is unerring—two years after the halberds of the Pontefract men-of-arms rose together, fell together, and when they fell they beat out the life of Richard of Bordeaux. In Shakespeare's Richard the Second—a play in which the poet has thrown a false halo of sympathy over an abandoned and ruthless prodigal—he makes the widowed duchess of Gloucester revile John of Gaunt for not revenging his brother's slaughter, and she sends a sorrowful and bitter message to her dead husband's second brother—York:

> "Bid him—oh, what?
> With all good speed at Plashy visit me.
> Alack! and what shall good old York there see
> But empty lodgings and unfurnished walls;
> Unpeopled offices and untrodden stones?
> And what hear there for welcome but my groans?
> Therefore commend me; let him *not* come there
> To seek out sorrow that dwells everywhere."

And in a later part of the same play the Duke of York at Ely House (Ely-place) commands a servant

> "Sirrah! get thee to Plashy, to my sister Gloster—
> Bid her send me presently a thousand pounds."

Many a sorrowful day after, at Flint and at Ponte-

fract, Richard of Bordeaux must have thought of that fatal summer evening when "the murdered man" rode gaily beside him on the London-road, lured by his nephew's treacherous flattery to a cruel death in the vaulted room at Calais.

Pipes and tabors sound your best, for Dunmow is hard by Pleshy, with its purple waves of clover not untenanted by bees; malthouse cowls peer out among the green trees.

Now the crow honours Dunmow, not so much for the sake of its world-famous Flitch as for having been the birthplace of one of those great originators who re-shape the world on their lathes and send it spinning on truer and faster. Lionel Lukin, the inventor of lifeboats, was born in this Essex village, and all advocates for local patriotism should desire to see a statue to him erected there, to incite future Dunmow men to direct their talents to as noble issues as Lukin. Lukin obtained his patent in 1785. In 1789 a Mr. Henry Greathead, of South Shields, carried out a similar idea to meet a similar want, and by 1804 there had been already thirty-one lifeboats built and three hundred lives saved. Mr. James Beeching, of Yarmouth, improved the lifeboat in 1851, and in 1852 the tubular lifeboat was patented by Mr. H. Richardson, "the challenger." In 1865 there were one hundred and eighty-five lifeboats on our coasts. In 1864 they and Captain Man-

by's invaluable rope-throwing rockets together saved three thousand six hundred and nineteen lives, making, with the nine previous years, thirty-six thousand two hundred and sixty-one lives saved by the invention of Lionel Lukin, the noble man of Dunmow.

Ghosts of Beaumont and Fletcher, spirit of the incorruptible Bacon, hover round us while we tell of the old custom of Little Dunmow, referred to by Chaucer, and mentioned by Grose as a jocular tenure never to be forgotten. One of the Fitzwalters, in the early part of the thirteenth century, is said, after some sardonic reflections on the joys and sorrows, the roses and thorns, of matrimony, to have first instituted the ceremony (*circa* May 3.) He was probably the son of that "Mars of men," Robert Fitzwalter, father of Matilda the Fair, a lady with whom the dissolute and evil king John fell madly in love. He banished her father, who was in the way, in 1213, and then sent a perfumed messenger to the lonely Matilda, with earnest protestations of his old suit; but she being still cold, disdainful, and inexorable, the messenger, who either took her scorn very much to heart, or else had conditional orders, poisoned the lady with a poached egg salted with arsenic. In the church built out of the ruins of the chapel of an old priory, which stood where the present manor-house stands, and which was founded in 1104 by Lady Juga, sister of Ralph de Baynard, Lady Juga's tomb

is still shown (in the usual founder's place of honour) under an arch in the south wall. The first Fitzwalter, the father of Robert, lies cased in cold stone armour close by with his lady, and facing them reposes the fair Matilda in alabaster. A blundering tradition makes this Matilda the wife—"the Maid Marian"—of Robin Hood, who, if he ever lived, was a guerilla chief in Yorkshire. The old priory, defaced and vulgarized with a shapeless flat white-washed roof, is blinded with barbarous bricked-upwindows.

The time-honoured custom at Dunmow was to solemnly and rejoicingly present a flitch or gammon of bacon to any married couple who, a year and a day after their marriage, could take a prescribed oath that neither of them had repented their union, or had a word of quarrel. The claimants kneel on two uncomfortably sharp-pointed stones in the churchyard, and there, after certain other rites, take the following quaint oath:

"You shall swear by custom of confession,
That you ne'er made nuptial transgression;
Nor since you were married man and wife,
By household brawls or contentious strife,
Or otherwise, at bed or at board,
Offended each other by deed or by word;
Or since the parish clerk said Amen,
Wished yourselves unmarried again;
Or in a twelvemonth and a day
Repented not in thought any way;
But continued true in thought and desire
As when you joined hands in holy quire.

If to these conditions without all fear,
Of your own accord you will freely swear,
A whole gammon of bacon you shall receive,
And bear it hence with joy and good leave;
For this is our custom at Dunmow well known;
Though the pleasure be ours, the bacon's your own."

This droll mode of rewarding forbearing tempers was certainly current in Edward the Third's time, because Chaucer makes his merry wanton wife of Bath say of her worried husband,

"The bacon was not fet for hem, I trow,
That some men have in Essex at Donmow."

The flitch has been claimed three times before the Dissolution, and three times since: that is an average of about once a century. The claim of the 20th of June, 1751, was peculiarly immortalised by an engraving of Moseley's, from an original drawing of the scene made by David Ogborne, the artist representing the joyous procession on their return from Dunmow Church with the flitch, and before the traditional quarrel had taken place, as to how the bacon was to be disposed of. The happy and successful claimants were Thomas Shakeshaft, weaver, of the parish of Weathersfield, and Ann his wife. They knelt down on the sharp stones, so cruelly insisted upon, took the oath, and bore away the gammon. Moseley's scarce engraving was republished by Cribb, 288, Holborn, in 1826. The celebrated Bowles, of Cornhill, also published a large print, now rare, of

the Dunmow procession. After the repetition of the oath, the couple were seated in a square wooden chair, still preserved in the priory (very small it is), and carried round the site of the old manor, with drums, fiddles, and much noisy and exulting village minstrelsy; the flitch, totally ruined by being thrust through with a pole, was carried before them. The stewards and lord and officers of the manor followed with the inferior servants. Then, after the pharisaic couple, came a very interesting part of the procession—the jury—six ogling bachelors and six smiling and backward-glancing maidens, who were by this great example urged onward to the blessed matrimonial state. The ceremony must have been like a a wedding breakfast—a perfect seed-plot of future marriages. Many thousands of people from all villages and towns, as far as the borders of Suffolk, followed, shouting and exulting in the triumph of Love and Hymen.

The oaken chair used on this occasion was probably the official chair of some former prior of Dunmow, or else that state throne of the lord of the manor in which the Fitzwalters had, for generations, perhaps, received the suite and service of their servants. It was, however, a satanic device, the very Fiend's arch mock, the shrewdest subtlety of Discord, Mrs. Candour's grandmamma, to make the chair very narrow, so that the jammed and aching couple

should quarrel instantly they had won the prize.

Dugdale, that sound but ponderous antiquary, dug out from dry beds of sallow parchment the fact that Robert Fitzwalter, a favourite minister of Henry the Third, betook himself at the close of his troublous life to prayer and deeds of expiatory charity, and to bountiful hospitality and almsgiving, and it was he who re-edified the decayed priory of his pious and devout ancestress, Lady Juga.

In Dunmow priory, Dugdale says, arose a custom, begun and instituted either by Robert or some other of his successors, which is verified by a common proverb or saying, viz: "That he which repents him not of his marriage, either sleeping or waking, in a year and a day, may cheerfully go to Dunmow and fetch a gammon of bacon. It is most assured that such a custom there was, and that this bacon was delivered with such solemnity and triumphs as they of the priory and the townsmen could make."

A custom, almost precisely similar to that of Dunmow, existed at Whichenoure, in Staffordshire, but is much less generally known. Pennant, who visited Whichenoure House in 1780, states that it was "remarkable from the painted wooden bacon flitch still hung up over the hall chimney in memory of the singular tenure by which Sir Philip de Somervile in the time of Edward the Third held the manor." The oath ran as follows: "Hear ye, Sir Philip de Somer-

vile, Lord of Whichenoure, maintainer and giver of this bacon, that I, A., syth I wedded B., my wyfe, and syth I had her in my kepyng, and at wylle, by a yere and a daye after our marryge, I would not have changed for hane other, farer nor fowler, richer nor pourer, ne for none other descended of gretter lynage, sleeping no waking, at noo time; and if the said B. were sole, and I sole, I would take her to be my wyfe before all the wymen of the worlde, of what condytions soevere they be, good or evyle, as help me God, and his seyntys, and this flesh and all fleshes." If the claimant were a "villager," corn and a cheese were given him in addition to the flitch, and a horse was likewise provided to take him out of the limits of the manor, all the free tenants thereof conducting him with "trompets, tabourets, and other manoir of mystralsie." In respect to the Whichenoure flitch, Pennant remarks that it has "remained untouched from the first century of its institution to the present," adding, jocosely, "We are credibly informed that the late and present worthy owners of the manor were deterred from entering into the holy state from the dread of not obtaining a single rasher of their own bacon."

In Grose's time the Dunmow lords tried hard to save their bacon, and refused the honourable trial of the flitch to several believers in the excellence of matrimony. Probably, says the sly, fat friend of Burns,

it has been refused because "conjugal affection is not so rare now as heretofore, or else because qualification oaths are now supposed to be held less sacred."

The Dunmow flitch was first claimed in 1445, at least that is the first claim on record. Shakeshaft and his wife, in 1751, were shrewd people, for they made a large sum by selling slices of the beatified bacon to many of the five thousand persons present. Then the custom sleeping, as good and bad customs sometimes do, had a sound nap of a hundred and four years, till Mr. Harrison Ainsworth, the historical novelist, made a gallant and disinterested effort to revive it. The lord of the manor opposed the revival as a nuisance, but Mr. Ainsworth and his friends defrayed the expense, and provided not merely one but two set of claimants. We almost forget whether they were advertised for, but there they appeared, large as life, and much more real, Mr. and Mrs. Barlow, of Chipping Ongar, and the Chevalier Chatelaine, an ex-Bordeaux editor, not unknown in England as the dexterous and rather daring translator of Chaucer and other of our poets, and his lady. It was quite a romantic picture by Frith. Rosettes? We believe you! Banners? Rather! Fiddles, fifes and drums, trumpets, basoons, and horns? Plenty of them. Whether the stubborn lord of the manor could not have been compelled by the Dunmow people to

carry out the old tenure, is a moot point which the crow merely offers to the worthy lawyers of Essex generally. Let the cynics say what they like, let them compare marriage to a bag of snakes and eels (stuff!), to a lottery (pshaw!), to a birdcage, those who are in wishing to get out, and those who are out wishing to get in (rubbish!), we despise all such bitter churls. They know well enough (a pest on 'em!) the sour wretches, that every one of us has deserved the blessed flitch, and no one of us ever repented his marriage within the year, let them say so who will. It was a goodly ceremony that of Dunmow, and no doubt impressed on Essex maidens those fine lines of the ex-shrew, Katherine:

> "Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,
> Thy head, thy sovereign; one that cares for thee,
> And for thy maintenance commits his body
> To painful labour, both by sea and land,
> To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,
> While thou liest warm at home, secure and safe,
> And craves no other tribute at thy hands,
> But love, fair looks, and true obedience,
> Too little payment for so great a debt."

The last flitch given away was in 1860. There was a flying report that it proved as rusty as the couple; we have made enquiries of the local authorities about this, but we deeply regret to say that the only answer we could elicit was—Gammon!

At Colchester-on-the-Colne the crow is bound to stop for two reasons: first, for the sake of its old and

immortal monarch, King Cole; secondly, for the sake of the touching story of the two Cavalier friends, who were here shot by Fairfax for defending the city against the Parliament. This Essex town, situated on an eminence above the river, was an old British fortress, appreciated by the Romans, and moulded by their strong hands into Camolodunum (temp. Claudius). Here it is supposed Cunobelin and his sons, Guiderius and Arviragus (Caractacus), reigned. (Shakespeare has endeared these names to us by culling them from early British history, Bede or Gildas, and making them the sons of his Cymbeline). This town, where the Romans built temples and theatres, and established a mint, was one of their favourite colonies, and was often fought for. In A.D. 62 the fierce Boadicea chased the Romans from the town, and slew the entire ninth legion.

It was not till the third century that the real King Cole shone forth; but alas! he had no fiddlers three, and therefore surely never called for them. He was only a most respectable potentate, fond of oysters, and naturally much respected by the natives. Like a true British sailor, however, he rebelled from the Romans, resolving that Britons never, *never*, NEVER should be slaves, and was instantly besieged by Constantius Chlorus, a vigilant Roman general.

The siege lasted for three years, and promised to be as long as that of Troy, when one day of truce

the susceptible Roman happened to see Helena, old King Cole's beautiful daughter, on the ramparts, and exclaiming no doubt, "Dea certe," proposed immediate peace, so that he might marry Helena. King Cole joined hands on that bargain with the gallant officer, and the result was Constantine the Great, who was born at Colchester, who deserves a statue there if ever man did, and who was proclaimed emperor at York in 306.

Those tormenting vermin of England, the Danes, when not foraging up to Blackwater, were fond of investigating the Colne, and either opening the oysters or breaking open the houses. They grew fond of the place, stuck close to the oysters, and made the place a stronghold, a fortified port, and a centre of departure for murder and plunder. But hard times came for them in 921, when Edward the Elder stormed the town, put the restless Danes to the sword, and repeopled the town with stolid, honest West Saxons.

When the grave men sat down to prepare the Doomsday Book, Colchester was still a thriving town. In 1218 (Henry the Third) Louis the Dauphin took the town on the Colne. In Edward the Third's reign Colchester sent five ships, and a hundred and seventy seamen to the royal fleet, raised for the blockade of Calais, when our great King took the key of France, and his noble-hearted wife begged the lives of those six burgesses, as history has duly immortalised.

Then Colchester went on very quietly, feeding on her "weaver's beef" (sprats), till Lady Jane Grey's friends tried to seize the throne; and the Colchester men held out for gloomy Queen Mary, who, after her accession, complimented them by visiting the town. In Elizabeth's time the persecuted Flemings began to crowd the town to such an extent that the jealous bailiffs and aldermen grew alarmed, and issued a command that no stranger should be permitted to reside within the precincts of the place without their special consent.

But the great legend of the place in the crow's eye, is the touching story of the death of those brave gentlemen, Sir Charles Lucas and Sir George Lisle, who, under Goring, Earl of Norwich, held Colchester, in 1648, against Fairfax and the Parliament. The deaths of these gallant, though mistaken, Cavalier officers happened thus: Cromwell had just smashed up the Scotch army of the Duke of Hamilton in the North. The Prince was with his fleet in the Downs, the poor King a prisoner in Carisbrook, the Earl of Holland had been taken near Kingston in an affair of cavalry, in which young Villiers was struck down, while Goring and Lord Capel, with the Kentish and Essex Royalist troops, were shut up in Colchester. The Cavaliers, having eaten nearly all their horses, and despairing of relief from the tardy Scotch army, sent to Fairfax to propose terms.

Fairfax offered to dismiss the common soldiers, but would grant no conditions to the officers and gentlemen. A day or two was spent in deliberation. The fiercer sort were for a brisk sally at all hazards, but they had too few horses, and those that were left were weak for want of sufficient food. Some were for opening a port and dying sword in hand; but that was only to fall butchered without even a chance of revenge, so at last the calmer counsel prevailed. They surrendered, threw open the gates, and were at once led to the Town Hall, locked in and guarded. Presently a Puritan officer entered the prison, and demanded a list of the prisoners' names for the general. They gave it, and a guard quickly returned for Sir Charles Lucas, Sir George Lisle, and Sir Bernard Gascoigne. The butchers had come into the crowded slaughter-house, and dragged out their selected victims. They were brought before Fairfax, who (instigated as Clarendon thinks by the inflexible Ireton) told them that after so long and obstinate a defence, it was necessary, for the example of others, that the peace of the kingdom should be no more disturbed, that some military justice should be done, and that those three men should be presently put to death. They were instantly led into a yard contiguous, where three files of musketeers were drawn up ready for the dreadful duty.

Sir Bernard Gascoigne was a gentleman of Flor-

ence, who had only English enough to explain that he required pen, ink, and paper, that he might write a letter to the Grand Duke to explain how he had lost his life, and who should inherit his estates. Sir Charles Lucas was the younger brother of a lord, and the heir to his title. He had been bred in the Low Countries, and had served in the cavalry. He was very brave, and in the day of battle a gallant man to look upon and follow, but at all other times and places of a nature not to be lived with, of an ill understanding, and of a rough and proud nature, which made him during the time of their being in Colchester more intolerable than the siege, or any fortune that threatened them. Yet the Cavaliers all desired to accompany him to his death. Lisle, compared with Lucas, was as summer to winter. Though fierce to lead and certain to be followed, he had "the softest and most gentle nature imaginable, loving all, and beloved of all, and without a capacity to have an enemy."

When the news of the cruel resolution reached the prisoners, the cavaliers were deeply moved, and Lord Capel instantly prevailed on an officer of their guard to carry a letter to the general, entreating him either to forbear the execution, or that all the prisoners, being equally guilty, might undergo the same sentence. The answer was only an order to the officer to carry out his order, reserving the Italian to

the last. The three cavaliers were led forth into the castle courtyard. The men fired, and Lucas fell dead. Seeing that, Sir George Lisle ran to the body, embraced it, kissed the stern rugged face, then stood up, looked at the soldiers, and thinking they were too far off, told them to come nearer.

One of the men exclaimed:

"I'll warrant you, sir, we hit you."

He replied, smiling:

"Friends, I have been nearer you when you have missed me."

Thereupon they all fired at him, and under the shower of fiery lead he fell without uttering a word. Sir Bernard Gascoigne had already stripped off his doublet, and was expecting his death, when the officer told him he had orders to carry him back to his friends, for which mercy he cared not a whit. The council of war had feared that if his life was taken, their friends or children for several generations would be in danger when travelling in Italy.

When, what Clarendon calls, "the bloody sacrifice," was completed, Fairfax and the chief officers went to the Town Hall to visit the surviving prisoners. The Puritan general treated the Earl of Norwich and Lord Capel courteously, apologised for the necessities of military justice, but said that the lives of all the rest were safe, and that they should be all well treated and disposed of as the Parliament directed. Lord

Capel's high courage could not endure this, and he bade the Puritans finish their work, and to show the same rigour; upon which there were, says Clarendon, "two or three sharp and bitter replies between him and Ireton, which cost Capel his life a few months after. While in the Tower Capel made a daring escape, but was recaptured and beheaded together with the Duke of Hamilton and the Earl of Holland on a scaffold before Westminster Hall."

The ruins of Colchester Castle still exist. It is said to have been created by Edward the Elder. It stood on an eminence to the north of the high street. Its splayed loop-holed windows and square flat buttresses show Norman work. On the south side courses of Roman tiles and herring-bone intersect the clay-stone walls, and the labels and groins are of Kentish rag or Pembroke stone, all dyed with weather stains and furred with coloured mosses. The western side, Mr. Walcott says, measures one hundred and sixty-six feet, the walls are thirty feet broad at the foundation, and are flanked with north-east and north-west towers. In the south-east bastion is a chapel, now a militia armoury. In the keep were two suites of apartments; the walls of the gateway are all that is left of the approach. The great south gate is still preserved, and there are still visible the grooves for the portcullis and the niche for the warder. There is an earth rampart round the Roman

wall on the north and east. During the siege the choir of St. Botolph's was destroyed by Fairfax's cannon. St. Martin's Church and St. John's Abbey also suffered greatly, and all the fortifications were subsequently dismantled. The Balkon gate and other portions of the old wall are full of red Roman tiles from old Camalodunum, and they gleam out from among the glossy green ivy.

CHAPTER XV.

SAFFRON WALDEN AND THAXSTED TO HARWICH AND IPSWICH.

IT is impossible for our voyaging bird in black to pass over the chalk hills and seven streets of Saffron Walden, which is built on a tongue of land twenty-four miles north-west of Chelmsford, because there exists a curious and interesting legend about the origin of the singular name of that town. The legend, not to make a secret of it, is this, that formerly great quantities of saffron for the dyers used to be grown in this district of Essex. The first seeds or root of this valuable plant were brought from the East by a shrewd pilgrim, tradition says, concealed in the hollow top of the staff which supported his weary feet, and on which he hung his calabash of water. The orange-juiced saffron is a plant resembling a thistle, yet without down, and the rich dye is extracted from the full-blown flower when dried. The word saffron is Arabic, and means "yellow."

When we think of this useful and daring pilgrim, of Peel's parsley leaf, and of the strange romantic history of that daring renegade Turk who first introduced madder into Avignon, we see that commerce also has its romance. Lord Braybrook's umbrageous park, with a pleasant wilderness of shade, shadows the approach to Saffron Walden, and surrounds that stately palace of a house, Audley End, which occupies the site of a Benedictine monastery founded by Mandeville, the first Earl of Essex, "to the honour of St. Mary and St. James," in the year of Grace 1136. At the suppression it was granted to Sir Thomas Audley, who took it as the title of his barony, and in the time of James the First the Earl of Suffolk erected a many-windowed edifice here, which took an army of men thirteen years to put together, and was regarded as the largest mansion in the kingdom next to Windsor Castle. A small portion now only remains, a mere hut in comparison with its old greatness. The castle at Saffron Walden was built by the same proud Mandeville who built Pleshy.

Not far from Saffron Walden is a small village, Thaxsted, once a borough, rotten even in James the Second's time, and then disfranchised, but the black wings still refuse to pass it without a moment's poise, for here in 1577 (Elizabeth) was born that worthy, laborious, and delightful old compiler of voyages, Samuel Purchas.

From Dunmow Thaxsted and Saffron Walden can be clearly seen across a rolling country, covered with proud parks, fertile farms, and a fine patchwork of wood and corn land. Purchas, that worthy stay-at-home old clergyman, with the ceaseless passion and crave for travel, took his B.D. at Cambridge, where, in St. John's College, he was educated. In 1604 (James the First) he became vicar of Eastwood, but resided chiefly in London, being also rector of St. Martin's, Ludgate, that vexatious church that always keeps getting in a rude and envious way before St. Paul's when you are walking up Ludgate-hill, and longing to get a clear view of the old black giant. The great work of the old London rector was his well-known and valued Pilgrimage, or Relations of the World, a collection of voyages, in five volumes folio, a stupendous labour, and worthy of a nation of travellers like ourselves.

How solemnly and yet humbly Purchas begins his work!—

"First, therefore, I beseech him, that is the First and Last, the Eternal Father, in the name of His beloved and only Sonne, by the light of His holy and all-seeing Spirit, to guide me in this perambulation of the world, and to take view of the time, places, and customs. Therein to clearly testify my religious bond to him, whose I am, and whom I serve, and the service I owe unto His church, if at least this my

mite (five volumes folio) may be serviceable to the least of the least therein."

With this fine and religious preamble the old worthy goes steadily on through every country and region of the world—resolute as Drake, and as furious a hater of the Spaniards as Raleigh. His chapters on America breathe the old Elizabethan spirit against the Castilians. He is never tired of railing at the enormous cruelties of the conquerors of the New World. In his ninth book on America, chapter fifteen, he says, in a whirlwind of invective:

"I was once present," says Cases, "when the inhabitants of the town brought us forth victuals, and met us with great kindness, and the Spaniards, without any cause, slew three thousand of them; and twenty-two caciques met us, which the captain, against all faith, caused to be burned. This made the desperate Indians hang themselves (which two hundred did), till a Spaniard, seeing them take this course, made as though he would hang himself too, and persecute them even in the region of death, which fear detained some from that self-execution. Six thousand children died in three or four months space, while I was there, for the want of their parents, who were sent to the mines." From Darien to Nicaragua they slew four hundred thousand people with dogs, swords, fear, and divers tortures. The like they did in the kingdom of Venezuela, destroy-

ing four or five millions, and out of that continent carried to the islands for slaves, at times, in seventeen years, a million of people. But why do I longer trace them in their bloody steps?"

Such was the way in which men wrote who had just heard of the Gunpowder Plot, and who, as children, had seen their mothers' cheeks glow and their fathers' eyes sparkle at the glorious news of the rout of the boastful Armada. It was these cruelties that made the Spaniards hateful to all Europe, that corrupted their nation, that made their glory so brief, that rendered England their deadly and dangerous enemy for nearly a century; and, finally, it was these cruelties that has left them where they are at present—the last laggards in the race of civilisation.

Manningtree, near Harwich, though a mere small, struggling town on the southern bank of the Stour, is, like Pleshy, also a Shakesperean place, being mentioned in "Henry the Fourth," where Falstaff is compared, by the mad prince, to "a roasted Manningtree ox with a pudding in its belly." Manningtree is a spot especially connected with one of the most miserable and cruel of superstitions—the belief in witchcraft. It, indeed, went very hard with all poor soured, half-crazed old women for several centuries. Essex was especially debased by these irrational cruelties. The world had feverish fits of wild burn-

ing, as in Geneva in 1575, when, in three months only, five hundred witches were burnt, or, as in Como, in 1524, when one thousand were burnt in one year. That notorious fool or knave, or both, Matthew Hopkins, "the witch-finder," in 1645, hurried to execution about one hundred persons in Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk. This man pretended to discover the diabolical marks (generally warts) on old women, by which the devil had marked them for his own. At last, submitting to his own tests ("hoist by his own petard"), unlucky, over-zealous Matthew was all at once himself found to be diabolical, and was hanged incontinently. Still the fear and folly continued. That wise and excellent judge Hale burnt two unlucky persons for witchcraft in 1664, and in 1676 seventeen or eighteen persons were burnt at St. Osyth's, in Essex. In 1716, Mrs. Hicks and her child (nine years old) were hanged at Huntingdon, where the superstition still lingered. The last sufferer in Scotland was at Dornoch, in 1722 (George the First).

Harwich, a place declining ever since the French war ended with that thunder-clap at Waterloo, stands on a point of land bordered by the sea on the east, and on the north by the estuaries of the Stour and Orwell. The Romans, wishing to guard the Saxon settlements on the south and east coast from fresh German pirates, established a sort of sea patrol or

coastguard, under the command of "the honourable count of the Saxon shore," whose jurisdiction extended from Aldington in Sussex to Brancaster in Norfolk. The Saxons in their turn continued the same patrol, and the town obtained its name from their camp, "Here-wich" (the town of the army). The Romans have left traces here, for there is still a Roman paved road leading to the town, and a camp with ramparts and fosse reaches from the south side of the town to Beacon Hill field. In 855 King Alfred broke up the Danish piratical fleet here at the broad mouth of the Orwell and captured every vessel. After the Norman invasion, and the decay of the older town of Orwell, which stood on a spot now a shoal five miles from the shore, Harwich became a place of importance and a favourite place of embarkation for Holland and Flanders. In September, 1326, that wicked queen of Edward the Second, Isabella, landed at Harwich from Dover with seven hundred and fifty Hainaulters, her son, the prince, and her paramour, Roger Mortimer. Here, joined by three bishops, the Earl of Kent and the Earl of Norfolk, she marched against her husband and his evil counsellors. A year from that day the weak king was cruelly put to death in the vaulted room at Berkeley. In 1338 Edward the Third sailed from Harwich with five hundred blazoned, gilded, and turreted vessels, for his first campaign against France. In the following year eleven

French galleys, "willing to wound and yet afraid to strike," hovered menacingly round the mouth of the Orwell, but did not venture within reach of our bolts and arrows. In 1340 Edward the Third set sail again from Harwich on Midsummer Eve, and took half the enemy's ships and made many prisoners. In due time, and in fit sequence, that burly tyrant, Henry the Eighth, Queen Elizabeth, and Charles the Second visited the town. William the Third chose Harwich as his point of departure for Holland, and George the First and Second, always impatient to get back to sourkraut and Hanover, often started joyfully from this same Essex town, which modern travellers have malignantly branded as dull.

On September 6th, 1761, the great but dull Lord Anson arrived at Harwich from Cuxhaven with the Princess Charlotte, of Mecklenburg Strelitz, the destined bride of the young King George. She had been a week on the sea. She remained all the Sunday on board the royal yacht in Harwich Roads, and landing late on the Monday, was welcomed by the authorities in the usual respectful and tiresome manner. She then journeyed on to Colchester, where Mr. Green, a private gentleman, gave her tea, and a native of the place presented her with a box of candied eringo root. Lord Harcourt, the king's representative, described the Princess as full of sound sense, vivacity, and cheerfulness, no regular beauty, but a good

figure, with a charming complexion and very pretty eyes. The Princess entered London by the *via sacra* of Whitechapel, wearing a fly cap with lace lappets, a diamond spangled stomacher, and a gold brocade suit of clothes with a white ground.

In 1764, four years after the ascent of George the Third, Charles William Frederick, Prince of Brunswick, landed at Harwich, on his way to claim the hand of the young king's sister, the Princess Augusta. The new queen had a small German jealousy of Brunswick. The Prince was a knightly, ugly man, addicted to gallantry. The good people of Harwich nearly pulled down his lodgings in their eagerness to see him. Even the Quakers went slightly crazed; one Friend actually forced his way in, doffed his hat, in defiance of old Penn, kissed his hand, declared that, though on principle he did not fight himself, he liked those who could, blessed him, and departed. The marriage rites were so jealously restricted, that not even a congratulatory salute was fired. The bridal pair supped humbly at Leicester House, and the prince was driven to grace the opposition—foolish Newcastle, heroic Chatham, and the butcher Duke of Cumberland. At Brunswick the couple, more or less happy, were welcomed by the Countess of Yarmouth, the mistress of George the Second, the bride's grandfather. So much for German propriety.

On August 16, 1821, H.M.S. "Glasgow" sailed from

Harwich to Brunswick with the dead body of the imprudent and unhappy Queen Caroline. It was a singular fact that the naval officer who was charged to carry back her body was the same man who from the main chains of the "Jupiter" (fifty gun ship) had handed her a rope when she embarked in the Elbe, a hopeful, reckless, and happy bride-elect, twenty-nine years before. That cruel day at the coronation she claimed to be crowned, or at least to share in the ceremonial. The Privy Council of course decided at once against her, in spite of all the eloquence and subtlety of Brougham. She was repulsed at every door by the half frightened constables, grenadiers, and door-keepers. That cruel and unfortunate scene, so much better acted by Elliston, at Drury Lane, was on the 19th of July. On the 7th of August, the poor, foolish, high-spirited woman, striking at and pelting her husband to the last, died broken-hearted at Hammersmith. How could such a marriage have been expected to be happy? She was the daughter of a foolish, frivolous woman, and of a brave, handsome, vicious man. She grew up smart, clever, thoughtless, and imprudent. She arrived in England a romping, coarse, vulgar, dirty German woman, the first sight of whom drove the Prince to instantly ask Lord Harris for some brandy. The Prince was already married, and had been in love with the most beautiful and accomplish-

ed woman in England. The polished scoundrel, promising Mrs. Fitzherbert ten thousand pounds a year, had settled her in splendid infamy in a mansion in Park-lane ; and on his first visit to the punctilious, snuffy, dull, dreary old court at Windsor, had taken down the pretty, pouting, spiteful Lady Jersey. The Prince had only married this wilful German Frau in order to get money to pay his enormous debts, which included such items as four thousand pounds to his farrier, and fourteen hundred pounds a year to Mrs. Crouch, the actress, one of his innumerable ex-mistresses. The husband and wife hated each other at the first sight, and the more they knew of each other the more just and the more virulent the hatred became. After this disgraceful marriage, at which the Prince was so drunk that he had to be propped up by two of his affectionate and equally respectable brothers, there was a dismal supper at Buckingham House, and at midnight the happy pair drove off to Carlton House, wrangling with each other by the way—so at least Court rumour said. The King by Divine Right was just starting to glorify Ireland, and settle everything there by a flying visit. Lord Liverpool determined there should be no exhibition of popular enthusiasm for the crushed and tortured woman, and ordered an escort of cavalry to accompany the body at once to Harwich, in spite of the remonstrances and entreaties of Lady Hood,

Lord Hood, and Alderman Wood. The mayor and corporation factiously wished to bear the corpse with all civic honours through the city. Lord Liverpool, in his small, timid, mean way, wished to smuggle it by the New Road to Romford and to Harwich, or else by water direct; but if by water he was afraid of a riot at London-bridge. On the 14th of August—a wet and stormy day—the miserable tawdry procession set out. At Kensington church the cavalry tried to sidle off towards Bayswater. Then the city went mad, a barricade was instantly thrown up, and, in spite of the Life Guards, the cortége was hurried on towards the city. At Hyde Park gate and Park Lane there were fresh outbreaks. At the corner of Edgeware-road the Life Guards, losing their temper, fired at the people, wounded several, and shot two men dead. At Tottenham-court-road, however, the people, passively stubborn, forced the procession down Drury-lane into the Strand. The riot had lasted seven hours. Then the people shook London with their shouts of triumph.

The civic authorities accompanied the victorious corpse as far as Whitechapel, the eastern limit of the city "liberties." At Romford the mourners passed the night, but the royal corpse, sent on, rested in St. Peter's church, Colchester. During the night a silver plate, describing the deceased as "the injured" or "the murdered queen of England" was affixed to the

coffin-lid, but afterwards removed. At Harwich seven vessels awaited the body. The coffin was carelessly swung into a barge, the squadron set sail under a salute from Landguard Fort, and passed straight to Cuxhaven. At Brunswick some hundreds of the citizens drew the funeral car to the cathedral gates. The unhappy and unfortunate woman lies, says Dr. Doran, in the cathedral of St. Blaize, between two heroes—her old father, who fell fighting at Jena for ungrateful Prussia, and her brother, who, at the head of the savage Black Brunswickers, perished in avenging him at Waterloo.

Harwich, malignantly described as dull by a recent eminent topographical writer, has so fine a harbour that it is said by unprejudiced people that one hundred sail of the line, and four hundred sail of colliers, could anchor together there at the same time. Yet in spite of the two lighthouses, warning vessels from the shoal of the "Andrews," the navigation requires a pilot. Still somehow or another, perhaps because the town was too lively, the commerce and traffic have decreased since the French war ended: and it may some day, unless it looks out sharper, become as Orwell, over whose decay it once triumphed. No one, nevertheless, can yet crow over Harwich, for it boasts one hundred vessels and a considerable fleet of wherries that ply to Manningtree and Ipswich. In the docks seventy-four gun ships have been built.

The harbour has a fine opening, is deep and generous, and is, and probably always will be, the only safe sheltering roadstead between Yarmouth and the Thames; still Lowestoft is a dangerous rival. Yarmouth is more convenient for Holland, Germany, and Sweden; and now the garrison and government works are gone Harwich shows signs of age. Its ruin began in its own greediness as early as 1742, when the townspeople and innkeepers were so rapacious with strangers from Holland and Germany that sloops were started and went direct between London and Holland. Just the same short-sighted greediness, in the latter case for dock dues, ruined Bristol irreparably, and made Liverpool.

There was a time when old Burleigh shook his wise head over a chart of our east coast, and said, in his sententious way, "Harwich must be fortified against the Spaniard." Sure enough in 1625 (first Charles the First) a Spanish fleet swooped round Harwich, and rather scared the marsh people. In Queen Anne's time it was fortified against the sailors of Louis Quatorze. The blockhouses have disappeared, and so have the ancient gates, St. Austin, Barton's or Watergate, Castle Gate, and St. Helen's Port; but there is Landguard Fort, built by James the First, on the Suffolk point still, with its twenty heavy traversing guns, to protect the passage from the sea.

The sea gives and takes all along our coast. The history of its greedy and ceaseless annexations in our island would be geologically curious and valuable. Slowly it is sucking our island away, as a boy sucks a sugarplum. Harwich presents several curious instances of this. Beacon Cliff, on the south of Harwich, is an eminence of clay separating Orwell Haven from Walton Bay. It once had a signal-house and telegraph on its summit; but it now boasts the largest martello tower in England, mounting ten guns. With the clay stone of this hill, that hardens with exposure, Harwich is paved, and the stout walls of Orford and Framlingham Castles were long ago built. It is a clay full of fossils, bivalves, shells, and elephants' teeth. Captain Washington, says Mr. Walcott, has measured the speed of the sea's progress here. The cliff lost ten feet between 1709 and 1756, eighty feet between 1756 and 1804, and three hundred and fifty feet between the latter date and 1841. The septaria, removed for manure, would, if left, have in time formed a natural breakwater at the foot of the soft earthen cliff.

The vicar's field has been swallowed up since 1807, and part of a battery, built in 1805 or so, at a considerable distance from the sea, was swept away in 1829, and the ruins now overhang the shore. The sea, if not built out, will make a breach in time, the best authorities think, at Lower Dover Court, turn

the peninsula into an island, and destroy well-intentioned but somewhat somnolent Harwich. Felixstow, that little rising Suffolk watering-place, shows other dangers awaiting Harwich. It was here near the marshes, and at the foot of a range of bold breezy heights, that a zealous Burgundian monk, named Felix (they called him Felix because he was their best friend), landed about the year 654, the first Christian missionary sent to the East Angles, and their first bishop. It has one charming feature, a straggling place several miles long—it has no shops, and sends for everything to Walton, a village two miles distant. In spite of a salt marsh, unsavoury at night, it is not an unhealthy place, and the cliffs are full of springs. There was once a castle of Bigod's behind the church; a Roman villa is said still to exist, somewhere out at sea; and altogether, when it is once built, it really will be a town, and Bernard Barton, the Quaker poet, who was easily pleased, has sung of it:

> "On that shore where the waters of Orwell and Deben
> Join the dark heaving ocean, that spot may be found—
> A scene which recalls the lost beauties of Eden,
> And which Fancy might hail as her own fairy ground."

Such are the delusions of local attachment. At Felixstow Point, where the cliff, from reddish yellow darkens to brown and yellow, striped black like the carcase of a mammoth tiger, the sea has been at

it again. Waggon-loads of coprolites have been scratched and washed out of the cliff, and day by day, with this dangerous diminution, has increased a still more fatal gift—the sea, changing from shallow green to grey, shows where a tongue of shingle has grown southward from Landguard Fort. This sou'-west drift of shingle sand, centuries ago, filled up the northern of the two useful entrances to Harwich Haven, and joined this fort, originally on an island (vide old engravings), to the mainland. In 1804 this fatal "blue tongue of shingle" was five hundred feet long, with power to add to its number, and at its outer edge was seven fathoms deep. The cement workers have dug out huge slices of fossil earth from Felixstow for "cement stone."

The same blind, selfish seekers for money removed a useful ledge of coprolite that had hitherto barred the drift at Felixstow Point. The burrowing at Beacon Cliff, on which stands Harwich Lighthouse, hastened the evil. The invisible, ceaseless workers for evil went on. In 1841 the Demon's tongue had grown eighteen hundred feet long, and in 1859 nearly three thousand (no operation could remove it now), and, moreover, its base had reduced the practicable channel to eleven feet. Then the sleepers awoke. Harwich harbour spoiled, there would be no place of refuge on the east coast for our seamen from the Thames to the Humber; and civilisation having

had no effect in emolliating the manners of the North Sea, this was important. The Admiralty had long talked and surveyed, now, for once, it acted. In 1847 it began a long breakwater, stretching outwards from Beacon Cliff, hoping to drive, as Mr. White thoughtfully observes, the tidal scour back to the Landguard side, and to sweep away or shorten the Demon's tongue. In doing this, and dredging the shoals to the depth of eighteen feet, the Admiralty have swept away one hundred and thirty thousand pounds of public money, but the fatal tongue is still cruel, obstinate, and devilish enough to grow; and, some day, when that tongue does speak, it will cry, "Harwich is gone," and that will be true. There is a great deal of amber and ambergris, and some shipwrecked gold among that shingle, but it will never produce enough, even when found, to pay for a new Harwich.

A former governor of this same Landguard Fort that the crow has inspected, was Philip Thicknesse, the patron of that delightful ingenuous painter, Thomas Gainsborough, who was the son of a small clothier at Sudbury. Thicknesse bought a fisherman's house at Felixstow, and turned it into a pretty seaward-looking cottage. The old fort of dark red brick, with its honey-combed and probably useless guns, was built by James the First against the Spaniards, and was useful in Charles

the Second's time against the dogged Dutch, who in 1667, in their daring days after De Ruyter's battles with Monk, before we finally quelled them, and swept the seas of their clumsy vessels, actually landed three thousand men here. The crow likes to associate the old fort garden, with its ragged tamarisks and the views of the expanding Woodbridge haven, with the delightful painter whose Suffolk lanes and cottage children are so artless and so simple, and whose glorious portraits of Mrs. Graham, the wilful young beauty, and of the Blue Boy—most sturdy of lads—surpass even Reynolds's in grace and nature.

Up the Orwell, wide as the arm of the sea, snakily winding between flat muddy reaches, and broad sloping green meadows, that rise to woody uplands, we skim past Grimston Hall, the birthplace of that brave old admiral, Thomas Cavendish, the first Englishman who followed Drake's path round the world. He fitted out three ships against the robbing and murdering Spaniards, and sailed from Plymouth in 1586 (Elizabeth), six years after Drake. He took great prizes, among others an Acapulco galleon brimming with gold. Returning in 1588, he squandered his money like a brave foolish buccaneer, sailed forth again, greedy for more, tried fortune too far, and died off the coast of Brazil in 1592 (Elizabeth).

These estuaries breed sailors. A little further up the Orwell stands Nacton, where another as brave and as unfortunate a man as Cavendish once lived, Admiral Vernon. He was a Staffordshire man, son of a secretary of state to King William the Third, and had fought under Rooke (which is an interesting fact to the crow) at Malaga. After many great services he sailed with a brave squadron to South America, and all but destroyed Portobello. (Smollett was in this squadron.) In 1741, the fickle nation was enraged at his repulse at Carthagena. On his return home he was employed to patrol and guard the Kent and Sussex coasts during the Pretender's rebellion, but acting in opposition to the ministers, was suspended, and struck off the list of admirals. The London people illuminated in his honour, and there were nearly riots in consequence. Walpole has constant mention of the admiral and his factious supporters and opponents. The Admiralty, however, never gave him another chance.

Then the crow lifts again and bears away to Ipswich, and the sea-side haunts of George Crabbe, "the poet of nature and of truth," that simple-minded, reflective old Suffolk clergyman who struggled upwards towards the light, and pondered only too deeply and sadly over the mysteries of poor human nature.

CHAPTER XVI

IPSWICH TO ALDBOROUGH.

THE crow is now in Suffolk, and knowing what he is about even there, drops like a shot from a thin blue cloud upon Ipswich, "the Eye of Suffolk," built so pleasantly on its hill-slope, with a park at its brow, and a quay at its foot. The channel of the Orwell is very narrow between Nacton and Ipswich, and only great energy and labour could have made it navigable twelve miles from the sea for vessels drawing thirteen feet of water. At the lock hard by the town the Gipping joins the Orwell. Masts and factory chimneys, mechanics' institutes and old church towers, gable ends and handsome houses, thirty acres of docks, old narrow streets, and beyond the traces of the old ramparts of Romans, Saxons, and Normans, an undulating woody country, further still deadly lively Harwich and the great generous blue sea; such is Ipswich.

In spite of Ransomes' factory, with its dozen busy

acres tenanted by a thousand busy workmen, Wolsey is still the one great name that haunts Ipswich. Rapacious, vain, avaricious, proud, ambitious, unscrupulous, the Suffolk butcher's son contrived to govern a vain and passionate king, to rule over England, to intimidate France, and to direct Europe. This great Ipswich man all but attained the Papacy. Wolsey was born in this pleasant Suffolk town in 1471 (Edward the Fourth), and was educated at the Ipswich Grammar School. He went to Magdalen College, Oxford, studied hard, and became in one term fellow and tutor.

In 1500 he was a curate in Somersetshire, where he turned rather dissolute and wild. He is said to have been on one occasion put into the stocks by Sir Amias Pawlett, an indignity the proud priest never forgot. When he came to be chancellor, years after, he confined Sir Amias to the Temple, and made him build, as a punishment, that old house, now a hair-dresser's, near the Temple gate, a little to the west of Chancery Lane. The butcher's son, soon working his way to court, in 1508 became chaplain to Henry the Seventh, and ambassador to Brussels. His course upward was then easy. Fox, Bishop of Winchester, introduced Wolsey to the young King Henry, in order to supplant the Earl of Surrey, and Wolsey soon grew the king's boon companion as well as minister. Flattering him, and, moreover, sharing

his pleasures, he soon grew so indispensable that he was by turns made almoner to the King, Privy Councillor, Canon of Windsor, Registrar of the Garter, Dean of York, Bishop of Lincoln, Archbishop of York, and Chancellor. The temporalities of Bath and Wells, Worcester, and Hereford were given him, with first the bishopric of Durham, and then that of Winchester. The Pope made Wolsey cardinal and legate, the French king gave him a see, the French Regent sent him a present of one hundred thousand crowns. The Emperor, in compensation for his two disappointments of the papacy (Julius the Second and Leo the Tenth), awarded him a pension of nine thousand crowns of gold and the bishoprics of Badajoz and Palencia. But the king's divorce from Catherine of Arragon ruined him. Anne Boleyn soon began to look upon the proud cardinal as her enemy, and he fell like Lucifer, as Shakespeare says, never to rise again. The king stripped the quick-grown gourd leaf by leaf. The tyrant, with one hand, seized York-place, renaming it Whitehall, and with the other clutched at Hampton Court. Wolsey's retinue of one hundred persons was disbanded. His cloth of gold and silver hangings were taken by the master who had given them. Even his gold plate was confiscated. He was accused by his enemies of claiming equal rank with the king, and of monopolising royal power; that was nearly all that could

be alleged. Wolsey might have been

"A man of most unbounded stomach."

Certainly, to judge by his portraits (always we believe in profile), he was uncommonly stout; but he was also a man of grand views, of princely generosity, and of far-seeing and honourable ambition. It speaks well for him that his servants loved him, and that he fell at last only from resisting a wicked and unjust divorce. Above all, we honour the Cardinal for having founded Christ Church and Ipswich College. If his ambition had been less ecclesiastical, we might have had our Reformation begun with more even-handed robbery, and less greedy injustice. What is great in the man lives in Shakespeare, for what was bad he had bitterly atoned long before. Sick, feeble, and prematurely old, he begged at the gates of Leicester Abbey a little earth "for charity." In his dying words—"Had I but served my God as I have served my king, he would not have deserted me in my grey hairs"—there breathed forth deep repentance and infinite regret for what might have been. The Tudor gateway of Wolsey's Ipswich College of moulded red bricks, still standing on the east side of St. Peter's churchyard, has become the entrance of a private house. It looks rather helpless now, and leans over towards the street. Ipswich college had first been an Austin canon's Priory, founded in 1177, and rebuilt in the reign of Richard Cœur-de-Lion. Wolsey suppressed the old

priory, and founded a college for a dean, twelve secular canons, eight clerks, and eight choristers to the honour of the Virgin Mary, and also a grammar school, which he designed as a nursery for his great college at Oxford. In his lavish way he then endowed the college with all the lands of the suppressed monasteries of Snape, Dodnash, Wikes, Horkesley, Tiptree, Romborough, Felixstow, Bromehill, Bliburgh, and Montjoy. Henry the Eighth bestowed the college lands on one Thomas Alverde, and James the First gave them to Richard Percival and Edmund Duffield. It is a singular fact that "up to within the last ten years," says Mr. Walter White, writing in 1865, "there was a Wolsey a butcher living in this town—a fact which leads me to imagine an unbroken succession of butchers of the same name from the days of the original Wolsey."

Skelton, the rugged satirist, who had to fly from Wolsey's wrath and take sanctuary at Westminster, has left some savage verses on the proud "butcher's cur," whom he etches snubbing the nobles at the Privy Council, and striking them dumb by one dash of his hand upon the table. Sir Thomas More has also (according to Dr. Wordsworth) sketched Wolsey in his "full-blown dignity." He describes the full-blown favourite sitting alone at dinner under the daïs in his hall, and asking his courtiers how they liked an oration he had just delivered. "Then I ween," says the

writer, "no man ate one morsel of meat more. Every man was fallen into so deep a study for the finding of some exquisite praise, for he that should have brought out but a vulgar and a common commendation would have thought himself shamed for ever. Then said we our sentences row by row as we sat, from the lowest unto the highest, in good order, as it had been a great matter of the common weal in a right solemn counsayle. A world it was to see how a man before me marked every man's word, and the more proper it was the worse he liked it for the cumbrance that he had to study out a better to pass it. He even sweat with his labour, so that he was fain, now and then, to wipe his face; and this man, when he had to speak said nothing, and yet surpassed all the preceding flatterers who had exhausted trope and metaphor upon the subject. For as he were ravished unto heavenward with the wonder of the wisdom and eloquence that my Lord's Grace had uttered in that oracyon, he fette a long sigh with an oh! from the bottom of his heart, and held up both his hands, and lift up his head, and cast up his eyes unto the welkin, and wept." This is a truly Hogarthian picture of a coarse flatterer. No king could have lived more sumptuously than Wolsey, even his head cook wore damask and satin, and flung a chain of gold round his neck. In his chapel the cardinal kept twelve singing boys, and in his private ecclesiastical processions

it was not unusual to count forty-one persons wearing sumptuous copes, besides cross-bearers and pillar-bearers. Forty cup-bearers, carvers, and servers waited at his table, and nine or ten lords were daily in attendance on him. He had forty-six yeomen of the chamber, and sixteen doctors and chaplains to say daily mass. His four running footmen were superbly apparelled, and he had also in attendance a herald, a physician, four minstrels, a tent-keeper, an armourer, and other servants, and to every officer, gentleman, or young lord in his court he allowed two or three servants.

Cavendish, Wolsey's faithful and loyal gentleman usher, has left an elaborate account of the Cardinal's appearance and state as he rode daily to Westminster Hall, or down Thames-street to take boat and meet the King at Greenwich. He would emerge from his privy chamber at York House (afterwards Whitehall) attired in flowing splendour of scarlet or crimson taffety, and damask, with a round pillion on his head, and a boss of black velvet on its inner side. Round his neck would be a tippet of costly sables, and he held in his hand an orange filled with a sponge dipped in aromatic vinegar, to smell in the crowd, or when he was pestered with importunate suitors. Before him was always borne first the great seal of England, and, secondly, the scarlet Cardinal's hat, both carried by noblemen or gentlemen,

bareheaded. From his presence chamber he always set forth with two great silver crosses upraised before him, followed by two pillars of silver, and a pursuivant-at-arms, carrying a large silver gilt mace. The gentlemen ushers cried out, "On, my lords and masters, on before, make way for my Lord's Grace!" At the hall door he generally mounted a mule trapped in crimson velvet with gilt stirrups. His cross-bearers also rode upon horses trapped in red, and near them marched four footmen carrying gilt pole-axes. No wonder choleric Harry soon grew jealous of such a rival!

Ipswich can boast older houses than Wolsey's. The grammar-school was once the refectory of a Dominican friary, built in the reign of Henry the Third. The brick town-hall was once part of St. Mildred's Church, erected in 1449. St. George's Chapel, now a malt kiln, was once a Cistercian house. "The Tankard" public-house was once the mansion of Sir A. Wingfield (temp. Henry the Eighth). The archdeacon's house, near St. Mary-at-Tower, was built in 1471, the very year of Wolsey's birth. Sparrow's House, says Mr. Walcott, an excellent judge of these matters, is a fine specimen of the domestic architecture of Charles the Second's reign, and in the side streets through which the Orwell crescents there are many fine old Tudor buildings, but none finer than "the Old House," now a bookseller's, and very quaint,

with its carved panels, pilasters, and brackets.

The crow can hardly resist a short slant flight from Ipswich to Sudbury, which lies green embowered among its deep sunken lanes in the valley of the willowy Stour, which is here gay with quick wherries. This town has bred weavers of baize, silk, and velvet ever since the days when Edward the Third planted some Flemish artisans here.

The quiet thorough English scenery in which Gainsborough delighted is to be found all round "Subbry"—deep lanes, winding between steep fern-covered banks, and under the shade of elms. The ash feathers at the edge of the swaying cornfields, and beech trees, mantled in ivy, guard leafy ponds; the church tower, the cottage doors, the rustic children, all remind us of Gainsborough, the great painter, born here in 1721. His father was a dissenting clothier, a resolute man, who was supposed to always carry concealed arms. A wood is still shown where Gainsborough, when a child, used to play truant that he might sketch. One of his earliest efforts was to paint the rustic face of a thief whom he had seen from behind some bushes suspiciously eyeing a pear tree in his (Gainsborough) father's garden. The rogue was confronted with the drawing and taxed with his intention. The clever boy reluctantly confessed to be a genius, was sent to London to study with Gravelot and under Hayman, the rollicking friend of Ho-

garth. He returned to Suffolk at eighteen, and there, while sketching a woodland scene, fell in love with a pretty figure in the foreground, Margaret Burt, a young Scotch lady of good family, supposed to be a natural daughter of the Pretender. The young pair left Sudbury and took a small house at Ipswich at a rent of six pounds a year, and were patronised by Philip Thicknesse, the governor of Landguard Fort, who afterwards, when the painter had the audacity to become independent, maligned him, as Wolcot had maligned his refractory protégé Opie.

The governor, a great man at Ipswich, taught the young painter the violin, and gave him a commission for thirty guineas. A picture of Landguard and the port of Harwich, being engraved by Major, gained the painter great fame; and in 1758, growing like a flower too big for the first pot, he removed to Bath, and took grand lodgings in the Circus. In spite of the alarm of his good but thrifty wife, Gainsborough soon threw off the somewhat oppressive patronage of Thicknesse, and gradually pushed on his prices for a head from five guineas to eight, and his whole lengths to a hundred. He grew up a rough, humorous, intractable genius, passionately fond of music and landscape painting, but obliged to drudge at portraits to earn bread and cheese. He was always buying a new instrument, and trying to learn it, and he filled his

house with theorbos, violins, hautboys, viols, and lutes. Gainsborough next removed to London and took the Duke of Schomberg's house in Pall Mall. He had already exhibited for thirteen years in the Royal Academy, and his success was sure. Even Reynolds now grew jealous at his fame. He painted the Royal Family, and that at once made him fashionable, in spite almost of himself; for he was brusque, proud, and blunt, and had no more tact than a Bosjezman. He confessed that the Duchess of Devonshire's beauty baffled his pencil, and he fairly threw up the sponge when Garrick and Foote grimaced before him. Though subject to irresistible depressions, Gainsborough was delightfully original in society, and, with Johnson, Sheridan, and Burke, appeared in his best colours. The landscapes of this Suffolk painter were not popular during his life, nor did his simple-hearted and entirely frank and bright village children by any means delight the masses. He died, in1788, of cancer, arising from a cold caught at the trial of Warren Hastings. Almost his last words were, "We are all going to heaven, and Vandyck is of the company." Gainsborough's letters are the most delightful compound of single-hearted sense and nonsense almost ever written.

Along the Suffolk coast now, from the Landguard sand-hills to the low gravel cliffs that reach to Bawdsey. It is the country painted for us in the Dutch

manner by Crabbe. The crow is bearing away straight for Aldborough and the sea-side haunts of Crabbe, that delightful painter of simple village life, who knew the heart so well, and explored its darkest depths with stern surgery, yet with a Christian tenderness and pity. Crabbe has sketched Hollesley Bay, which lies between Bawdsey and Orford Ness, and where the low marshy shore at the estuary of the river Alde hardens into shingle. It is sketched in the poet's usual low tone of colour; but it displays also his invariable love of truth.

"Lo! where the heath, with withering brake, grown o'er
Lends the light turf that warms the neighbouring poor;
From thence a length of burning sand appears,
Where the thin harvest waves its withered ears;
Rank weeds, that every art and care defy,
Reign o'er the land, and rob the blighted rye;
With mingled tints the rocky coasts abound,
And a sad splendour vainly shines around."

At Aldborough Bay a shingly beach parts the marshes of the Alde from the sea, while northward the coast, low and flat for seven monotonous miles, gradually rises into cliffs of sand and shingle.

"A hot and stormy beach,
Where all beside is pebbly length of shore,
And far as eye can reach, it can discern no more."

From Dunwich to Southworld the cliffs of chalk, rubble and sand, with gravel and red loam below, tell wonderful stories of the slow changes of the earth's surface. There is indeed almost a complete coral

reef lying between Aldborough and Orford. Shells of the Indian sea are seen in what was once probably the bed of the old German Ocean—the grandfather, we mean, of the present one. In it have been found teeth of mastodons, bones of rhinoceros, teeth of bears and whales, antlers of deer, spikes of rays, and the teeth of leopards and hogs. In the fluvio-marine formation, says Sir C. Lyell, about twenty species of land and freshwater shells have been discovered, and about ninety marine species; of these the proportion now living does not exceed the ratio of sixty per cent.

The Alde once entered the sea at Aldborough, but the flood tides, throwing up ridges of sand and shingle, gradually deflected the river to the south, and its ancient outlet was transferred ten miles to the south-west. An ancient sea-cliff has been left stranded and deserted far inland. The Alde now flows within two hundred yards of the coast southward, then with strange wilfulness suddenly runs parallel to the sea, divided from it only by a long, narrow, fenny spit of land. At Orford the river widens into the grandeur of an estuary. The not too lively town of Aldborough consists of one long street in the valley of the Slaughden, sheltered by a steep hill. The bay is bounded by Thorpe Point and Orfordness. Crabbe, the poet, is the great name here, and his memory consecrates the dulness of a place the sea seems bent on slowly swallowing. The Crabbes are

numerous both in Norfolk and Suffolk. It was a pilot named Crabbe, of Walton, who was consulted about the fleet of Edward the Third, not long before Cressy. The poet's grandfather was a collector of the customs at Aldborough, and his son George (the poet's father) kept a parish school over the porch of the church at Orford, and was afterwards parish clerk at Norton, near Loddon, in Norfolk. Returning to Aldborough, he became first warehouse-keeper and then collector of the salt dues. He appears to have been a man of strong, vigorous mind, renowned for business tact and powers of calculation. George Crabbe, the poet, was born in 1754; his next brother was a glazier; the third became a captain of a Liverpool slaver, and was set adrift by some slaves who had mutinied. The fourth brother, also a sailor, was taken prisoner by the Spaniards, and sent to Mexico, where he became a prosperous silversmith, till the priests persecuted him, and he had to fly to Honduras. Aldborough was originally a mere wretched cluster of small fishermen's houses, lying between the Church Cliff and the German Ocean. The two parallel, unpaved streets ran in dirty and noisome competition between rows of mean and scrambling houses, those nearest to the sea being often destroyed by storms. From a plan of the town in 1559, says the Reverend J. Ford, it appears that a range of Denes then existed between the town and the sea, and that

the church was more than ten miles its present distance from the shore. The beach spreads in three ridges: large rolled boulders, loose shingle, and at the fall of the tide a long, yellow stripe of fine hard sand. In the old days there were vessels of all sorts lolling, with pitchy sides, upon the shore, from the large heavy trawl boat to the yawl and prame. The fishermen dried their brown nets or sorted their fish, while near the gloomy old town-hall a group of pilots, watchful for signals in the offing, took their short, quick, to-and-fro pace, as if longing for the old restrictions of the narrow and rolling deck. Nor was the inland landscape either grand or smiling—only open, dull, sandy commons and sterile farms, with trees rusted and stunted by the salt winds. Crabbe has painted every picture of the scene. Here is Slaughden quay touched as by Vandervelde:

> "Here samphire banks and salt wort turned the flood,
> Their stakes and seaweeds withering on the mud;
> And higher up a ridge of all things base,
> Which some strong tide has rolled upon the place;
> You is our quay! those smaller boys from town
> Its various wares for country use bring down."

By the impetuous salt-master slow, studious, awkward George was somewhat despised. "That boy," he used to say, "*must* be a fool. John and Bob and Will are of some use about a boat, but what will that *thing* be good for?" Crabbe was, however, known at

Aldborough as a boy of reading, and was regarded with a certain respect. One day, when a rough lad he had angered was going to thrash him, an elder boy gravely put in his veto.

"No, no, you mustn't meddle with him," he said; "let *him* alone, for he ha' got larning."

When first sent to school at Bungay, in Suffolk, Crabbe did not yet know how to dress himself, and the first morning, in great confusion, he whispered to his bedfellow,

"Can you put on your shirt, for—for—I'm—afraid I can't."

In this rough Suffolk school Crabbe nearly met his death, for once, when he and other boys were punished for playing at soldiers by being stuffed into a large dog-kennel, known as "The Black Hole," Crabbe was fast suffocating. In despair he bit the hand of the boy next him. There was a cry of "Crabbe is dying!" and the sentinel not a moment too soon released the stifling boy.

On leaving school, Crabbe was apprenticed to a surgeon, and while waiting for this situation, was employed by his stern father in piling cheese and butter kegs on Slaughden quay. He concluded his apprenticeship with Mr. Page, a surgeon at Woodbridge, a market town seventeen miles from Aldborough. There was a long struggle before, in 1781, Crabbe visited London, won Burke by his simple-

hearted ways, took orders, became chaplain to the Duke of Rutland, and eventually at Parham, Glemham, and Rendham, devoted his tranquil life to doing good. He has sketched in his "Richards" all the salient points of his Aldborough life:

"I to the ocean gave
My mind and thoughts as restless as the wave.
Where crowds assembled, I was sure to run,
Hear what was said, and muse on what was done.
To me the wives of seamen loved to tell
What storms endanger'd men esteemed so well;
No ships were wrecked upon the fatal beach
But I could give the luckless tale of each.
* * * * * *
I loved to walk where none had walked before,
About the rocks that ran along the shore;
For then 'twas mine to trace the hilly heath,
And all the mossy moor that lies beneath.
Here had I favourite stations, where I stood
And heard the murmurs of the ocean flood.
With not a sound beside, except when flew
Aloft the lapwing or the grey curlew.
When I no more my fancy could employ,
I left in haste what I could not enjoy,
And was my gentle mother's welcome boy."

This quiet watering-place was first frequented about the beginning of the century by persons of rank, who found Hastings and Brighton too gay and restless.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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